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June 2025
Issue 175

*Closes: 15/8/25

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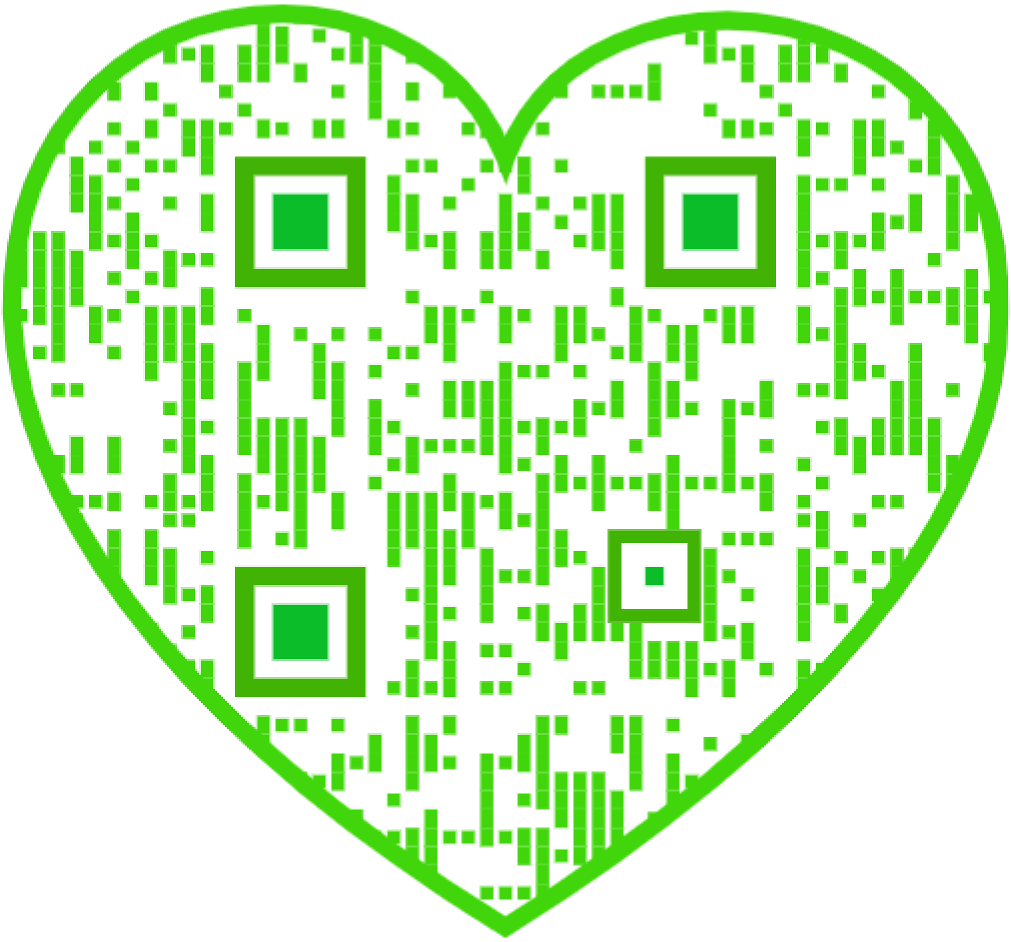

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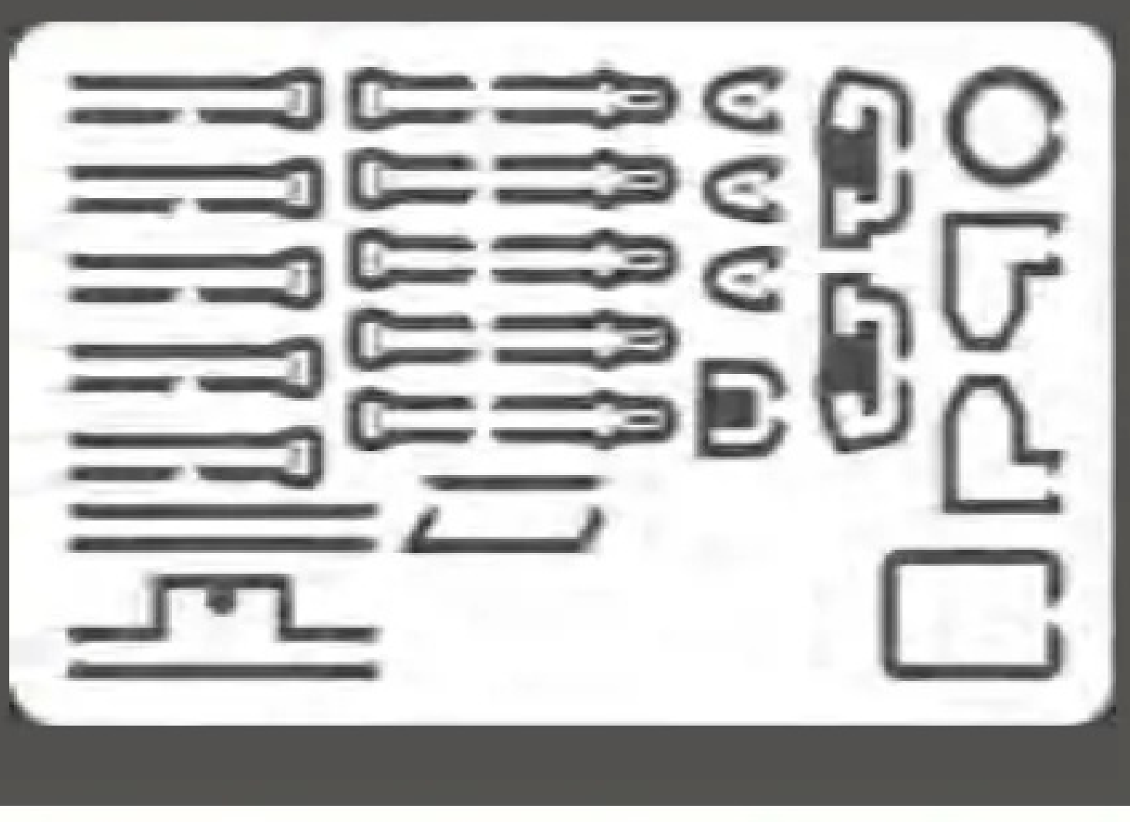

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WELCOME TO ISSUE 174

Like many readers, I often browse the magazine shelves when visiting either a newsagent or supermarket, and, over the past year or so, I've noticed how the number of titles on sale has decreased, with some stores reducing their display space by almost half. With that in mind, if you're finding it hard to get a copy of *AMW* in your local store, then there's a handy store finder on the Key Publishing website (https://keypublishing.com/storefinder/). Simply select the magazine, enter your postcode and a distance and it will tell you where *AMW* is on sale. If your search is unsuccessful or the store too far away, then remember that you can buy issues direct from the Key Model World shop (https://shop.keymodelworld.com) – not only is it cheaper (an issue is just £5.49), you also get free postage in the UK.

Turning to this month's great-value issue – with 116 pages for the same price as other titles with fewer pages – there's another veritable feast of new toolings on offer. Topping the list is Airfix's two-seat 1/48 Spitfire Tr.9, the first kit of the type in this scale. Hot on its heels comes Azur-FRROM's 1/72 Fairey Battle. Military modellers also have plenty to enjoy, from Das Werk's imposing 1/16 Sd.Kfz. 234/2 'Puma' armoured reconnaissance vehicle to the Takom 1/35 M29 Weasel amphibious transport. If conversions are more your métier, then buckle up for a stellar ride with our in-depth feature on adding Hypersonic's NF-104A set to the Kinetic 1/48 F-104G Starfighter.

Finally, I thought I'd give you a heads-up that the July 2025 issue of *AMW* is going to be a bumper 148-page edition, including not one, but two new toolings from Airfix. It will be on sale from June 5.

Enjoy the issue!!

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The average sale for the period Jan-Dec 2024 was **11,754** print and digital copies monthly

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82 Advanced Build – **Hell's Angel**

Jay Blakemore added a host of aftermarket accessories to the already impressive Eduard re-boxing of Hong Kong Models' 1/48 B-17F Flying Fortress.

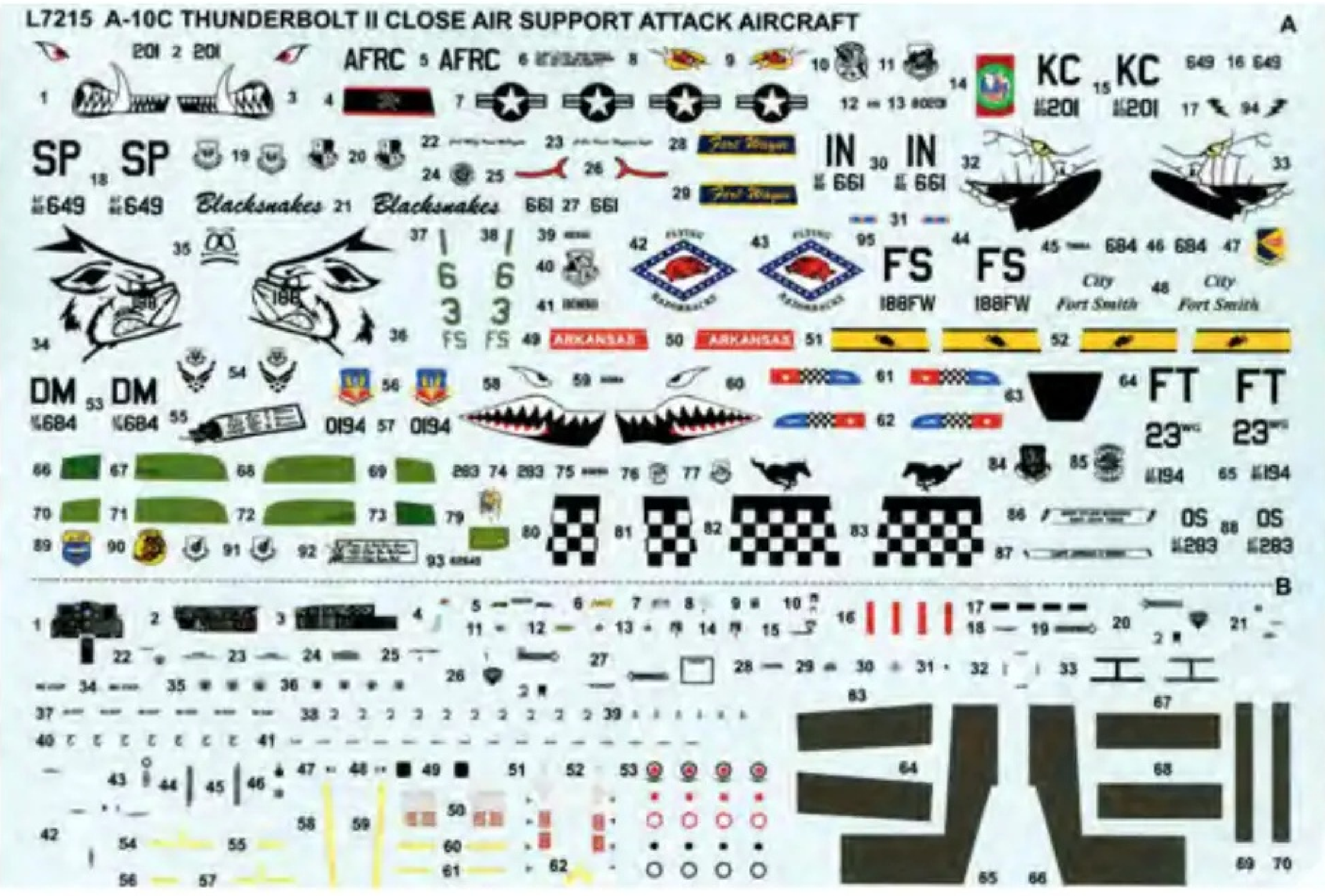
WIN

Turn to page 64 for your chance to win one of three Airfix 1/48 Jaguar GR.1/GR.1a kits, each worth £59.99

AIRFIX
1:48 SEPECAT JAGUAR GR.1/GR.1A

GREAT WALL 'HOGS' THE LIMELIGHT WITH A NEW-TOOL 1/72 A-10C

G.W.H
A-10C THUNDERBOLT II ATTACK AIRCRAFT
CLOSE AIR SUPPORT 雷電二式 近距离支援攻击机
1/72 SCALE
L7215

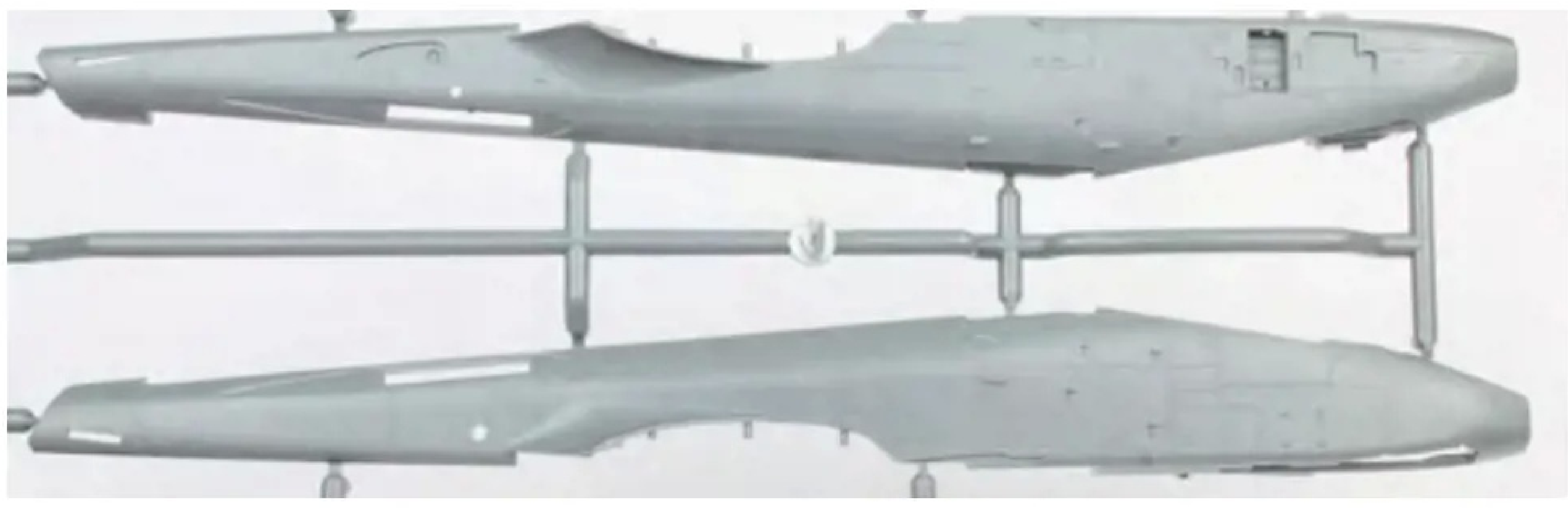

L7215 A-10C THUNDERBOLT II CLOSE AIR SUPPORT ATTACK AIRCRAFT
A
B

FOR MANY years, the only 1/72 A-10 kits were based on pre-production airframes, but now there's a modern tooling of this important type, courtesy of Great Wall Hobby (GWH).

This initial boxing (L7215) – which has a similar parts breakdown to its 1/48 'cousin' – is likely to be the first in a series. There are 30 styrene runners (including one frame for the clear parts) plus a small photo-etched (PE) brass fret, which supplies the low-voltage formation lights, and a metal nose weight. Parts breakdown is in typical GWH style; ten runners provide for the aircraft subject itself, with the remainder offering various underwing stores.

Fuselage halves feature recessed and raised detail, including domed rivets on the rear section, plus there's a recess for a gun gas vent panel, while the tailcone (which features both full Low-Altitude Safety and Targeting Enhancement mods and threat warning sensors) is separate. The cockpit is a gem; a five-piece ACES-II ejection seat takes centre stage, while the side consoles and instrument panel benefit from crisply moulded detail. Great Wall has arguably tried too hard with the head-up display, as it appears rather 'chunky'.

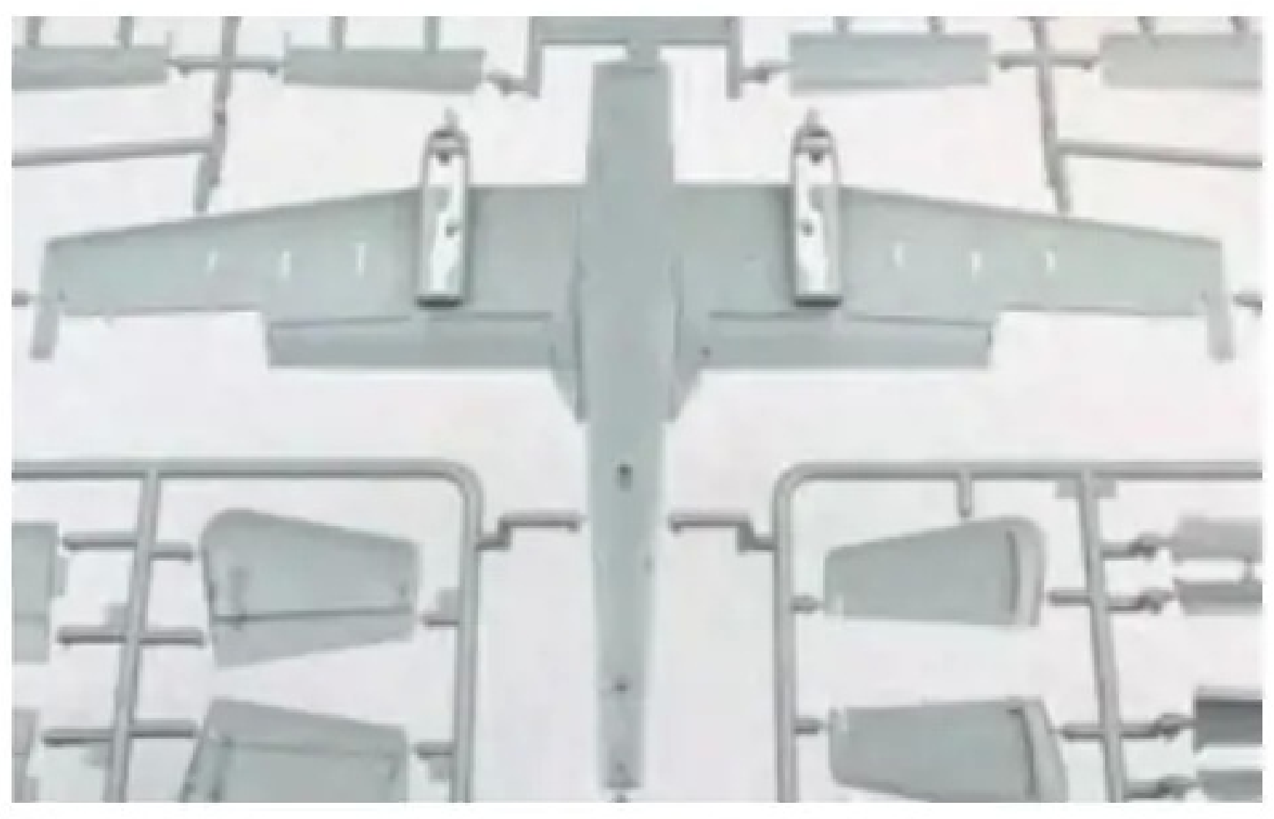
The wings are a highlight; these come as full-span halves, meaning there will be no alignment or wing-root seam issues. There's a choice of open/closed decelerons on the outer wings, plus leading-edge slats and raised/lowered undercarriage.



▲ The vertically split fuselage halves are essentially as expected, although Great Wall has opted for a separate spine panel to eliminate the usual longitudinal seam.

Veritable 'bomb truck'

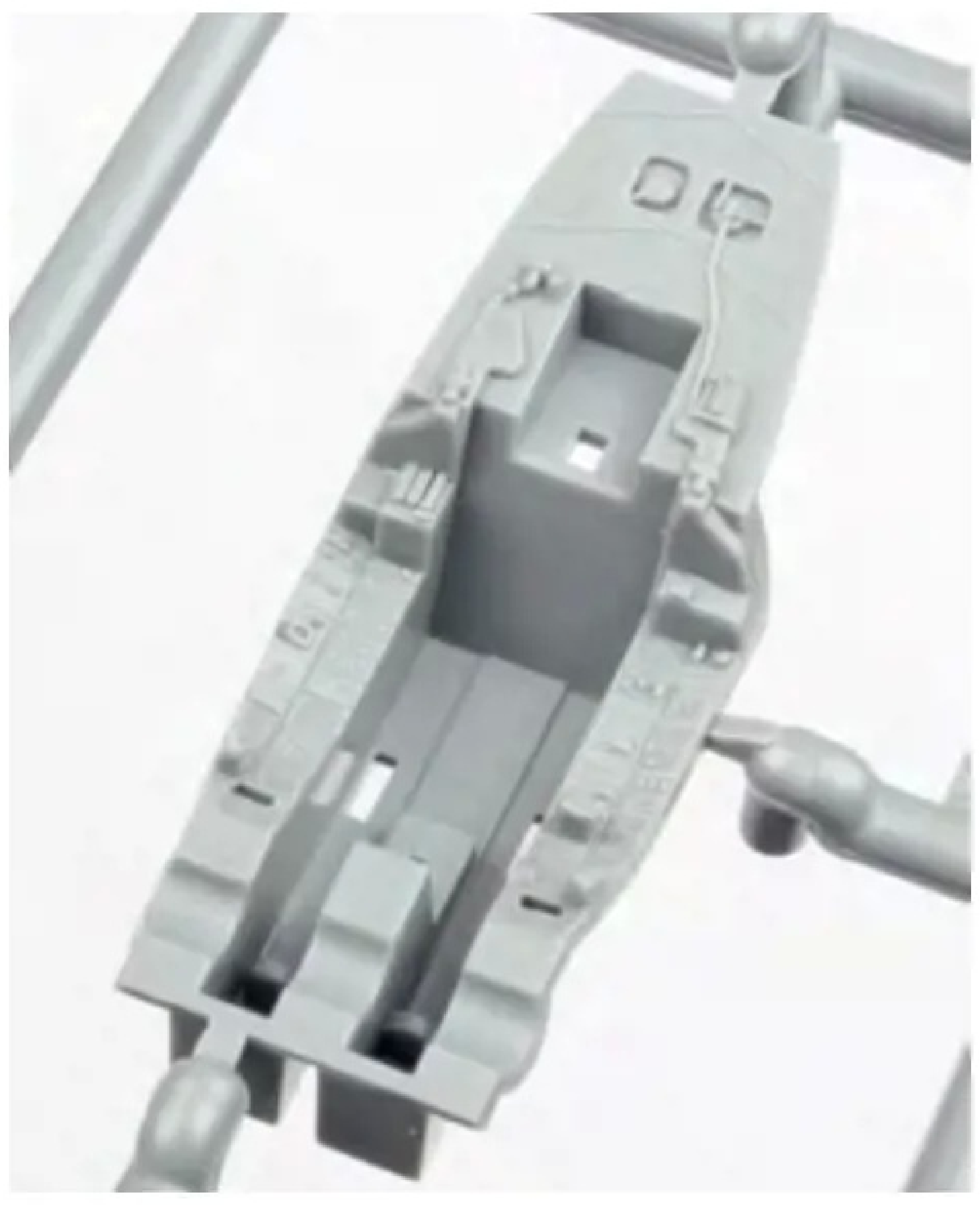
A prodigious selection of munitions is provided: GBU-31 and GBU-38 JDAM, GBU-39 Small Diameter Bombs, GBU-12 laser-guided bombs, AIM-9M Sidewinders, Litening and Sniper targeting pods, plus LAU-68 and LAU-131 rocket pods. These are joined by AGM-65 Maverick missiles, AN/ALQ-131 and -184 pods and a centreline ferry tank. Seven schemes are supplied, all clad in the current Light and Dark Compass Ghost Gray camouflage. The seven choices are:



▲ The one-piece lower wing half includes most of the fuselage underside and ensures the wings are at the correct angle, and there's no wing/fuselage seam to tackle.

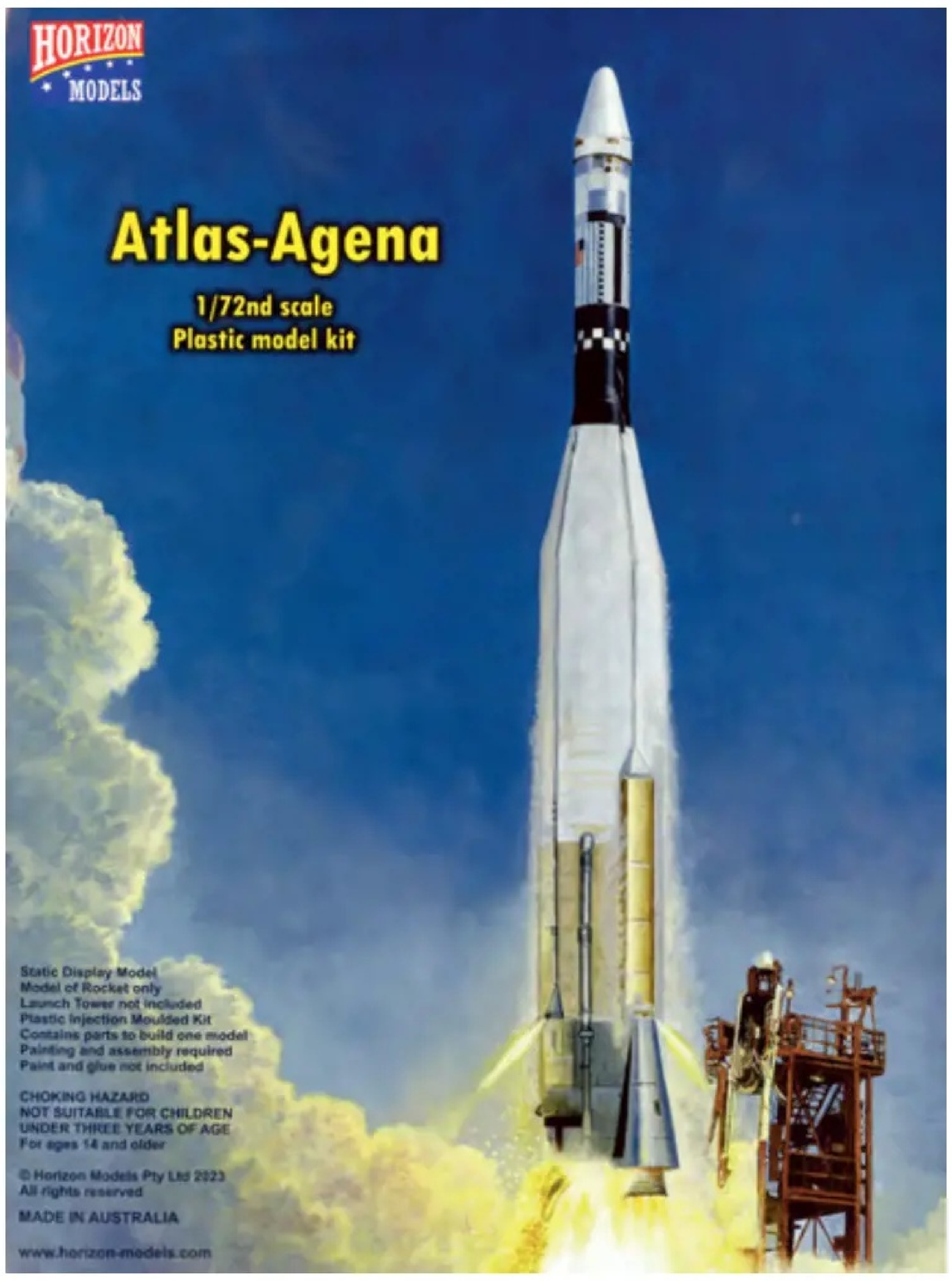
- 80-0201, 303rd Fighter Squadron (FS), 442nd Fighter Wing (FW), Whiteman, 2024
- 82-0649, 81st FS, 52nd FW, Spangdahlem, Germany, USAFE, 2011
- 82-0661, 163rd FS, 122nd FW, Afghanistan, USANG, 2018
- 80-0188, 184th FS, 188th FW, Fort Smith, USANG, 2008
- 78-0684, 354th FS, 355th FW, Davis-Monthan, 2020
- 80-0194, 74th FS, 23rd Wing, Langley, 2011
- 80-0283, 25th FS, 51st FW, Osan, South Korea, PACAF, 2016

Great Wall Hobby's 1/72 A-10C is easily the best kit of the type available in 1/72 and is expected to retail at £36.99. It's distributed via Tiger Hobbies (www.tigerhobbies.co.uk).



▲ The cockpit tub is well detailed, notably on the side consoles.

HORIZON MODELS BUSINESS FOR SALE



IN A BLOW for fans of Real Space subjects, Australia's Horizon Models is to cease trading and the business is now for sale.

Proprietor Tony Radosevic first started the company in 2015, debuting with the 1/72 Mercury Spacecraft twin-pack, and after that releasing splendid rocket kits such as the Mercury-Redstone, Convair Atlas and Atlas-Agena. Now, the business is up for sale and the deal includes the tooling, research materials, drawings and digital assets, including the box-top artwork, instructions and decals, plus research and development material.

Any potential buyer will have great products on their hands, as the detail on all of Tony's kits has been impressive, offering Real Space modellers mainstream quality and interesting subjects. The most recent item was the Atlas-Agena, the full build of which was in *AMW*169, December 2024 issue. Interested parties should email Tony directly at: tonyradosevic@horizon-models.com

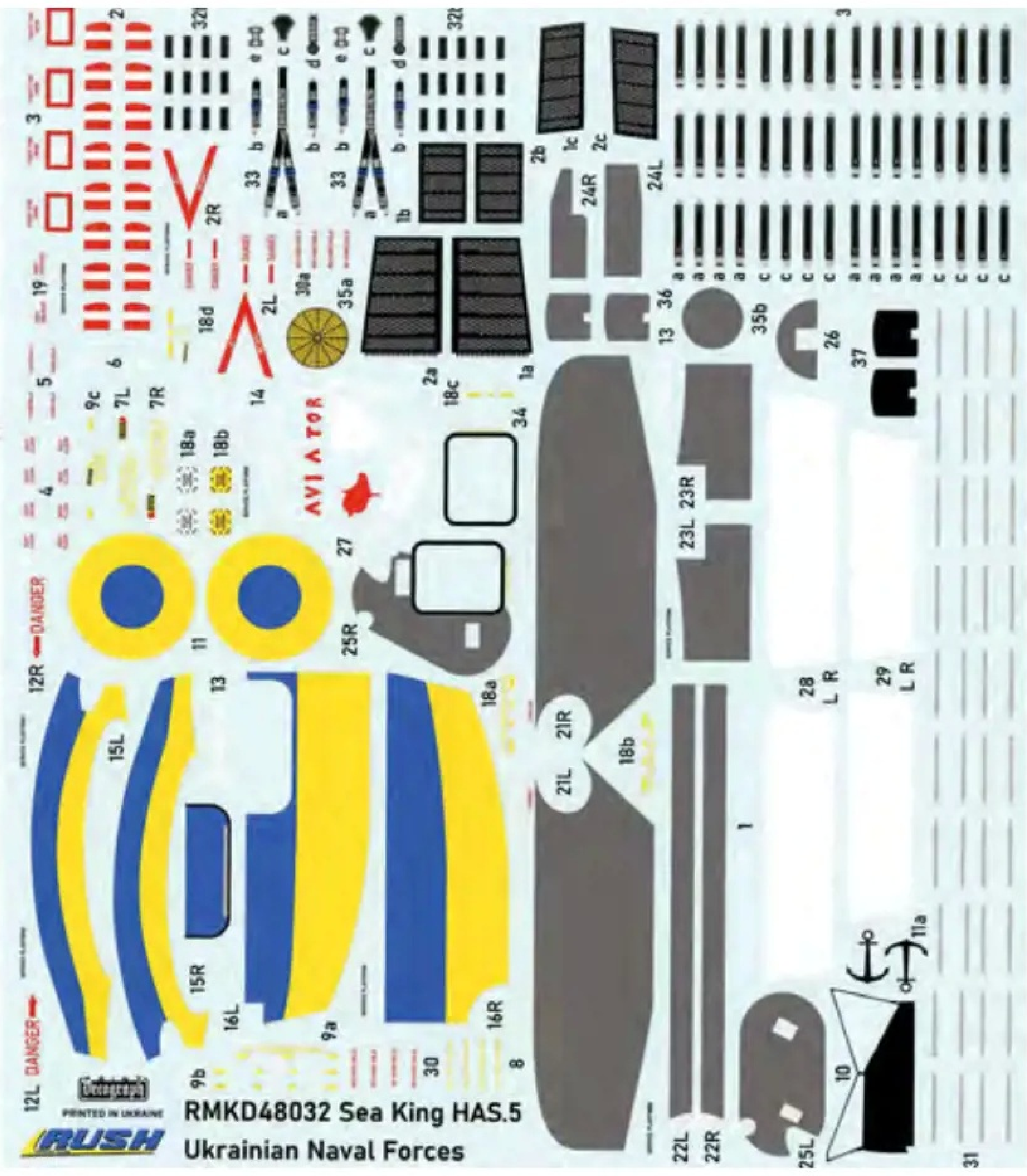
RUSH MODEL KITS' 1/48 UKRAINIAN SEA KING DECALS

UKRAINIAN CREATIVITY and spirit remain constant, despite the ongoing war. One shining light is that of newcomer Rush Model Kits, which has released a combined decal and mask set (RMKD48032) for a Ukrainian Sea King HAS.5, with Airfix's new-tool kit in mind. Blue and yellow national colours are employed in accents on the fuselage and undercarriage sponsons, along with white tail-boom stripes. The options are:

- **UR-H034, Delivery flight scheme, Antwerp, Belgium, May 13, 2023**
- **UR-H034, Ukrainian Naval Forces, Ukraine, 2024**
- **Aviator, Ukrainian Naval Forces, Ukraine, 2023**

Pleasingly, self-adhesive masks are provided for the interior and exterior cockpit glazing. The decals are printed superbly by Ukraine's Decograph and are thin, glossy and have wonderfully rich colour tones, featuring rotor blade stripes, airframe stencilling and seatbelts.

Rush's instructions are clear and concise, quoting paint codes for Mr. Color/Mr. Hobby, Arcus, Hataka, Humbrol and Tamiya brands. This decal/mask package is available via eBay shop www.ebay.co.uk/usr/collectablecommoditiesme, priced at £24.95 including post and packing.



Revell
LEVEL 4
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03799 Lockheed Martin® F-35®A Lightning II®, 1:72
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LEVEL 5
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LEVEL 4
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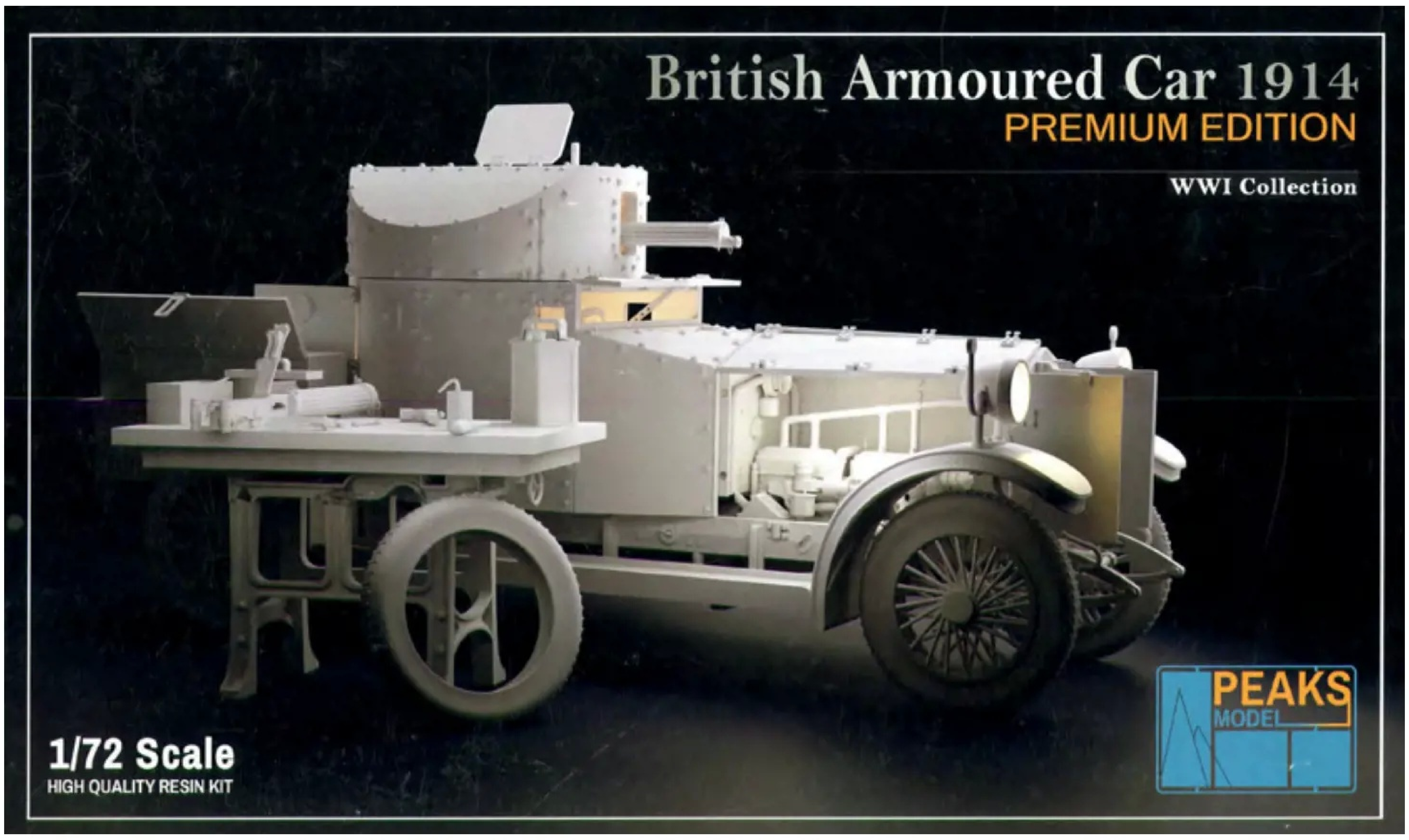
PEAKS MODEL 1/72 3D-PRINTED BRITISH WWI ARMOURED CARS



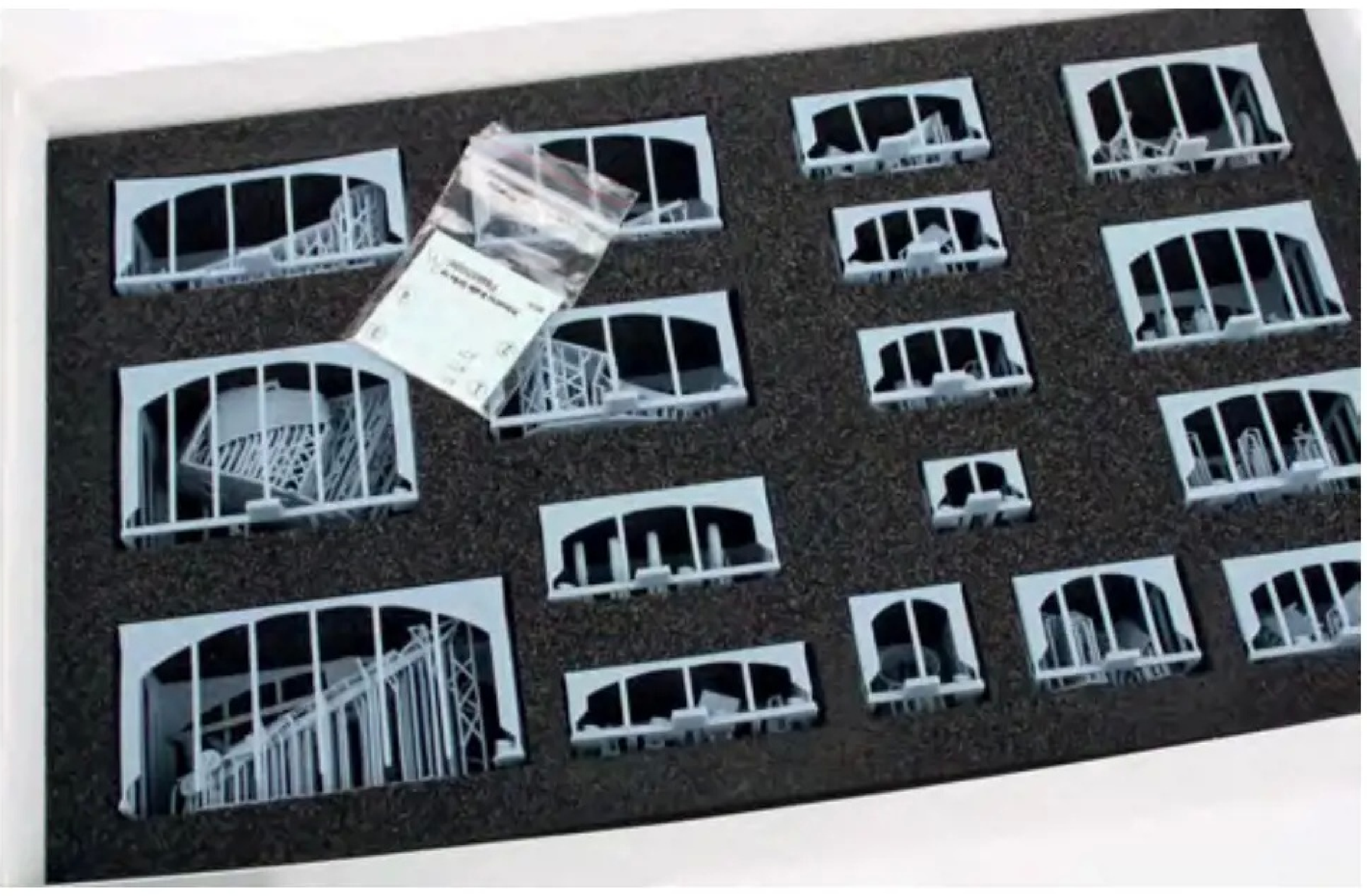
FRENCH NEWCOMER Peaks Model has made a stunning debut with its 1/72 3D-printed British World War One armoured cars.

The company has issued two versions: a standard vehicle with turreted .303 Vickers machine gun, while the other is the Pom-Pom prototype. The real Rolls-Royce armoured car was based on the firm's Silver Ghost chassis and initial vehicles were issued to the Royal Naval Air Service's first armoured car squadron. They were eventually passed to the British Army Machine Gun Corps' Light Armoured Motor Batteries (LAMB).

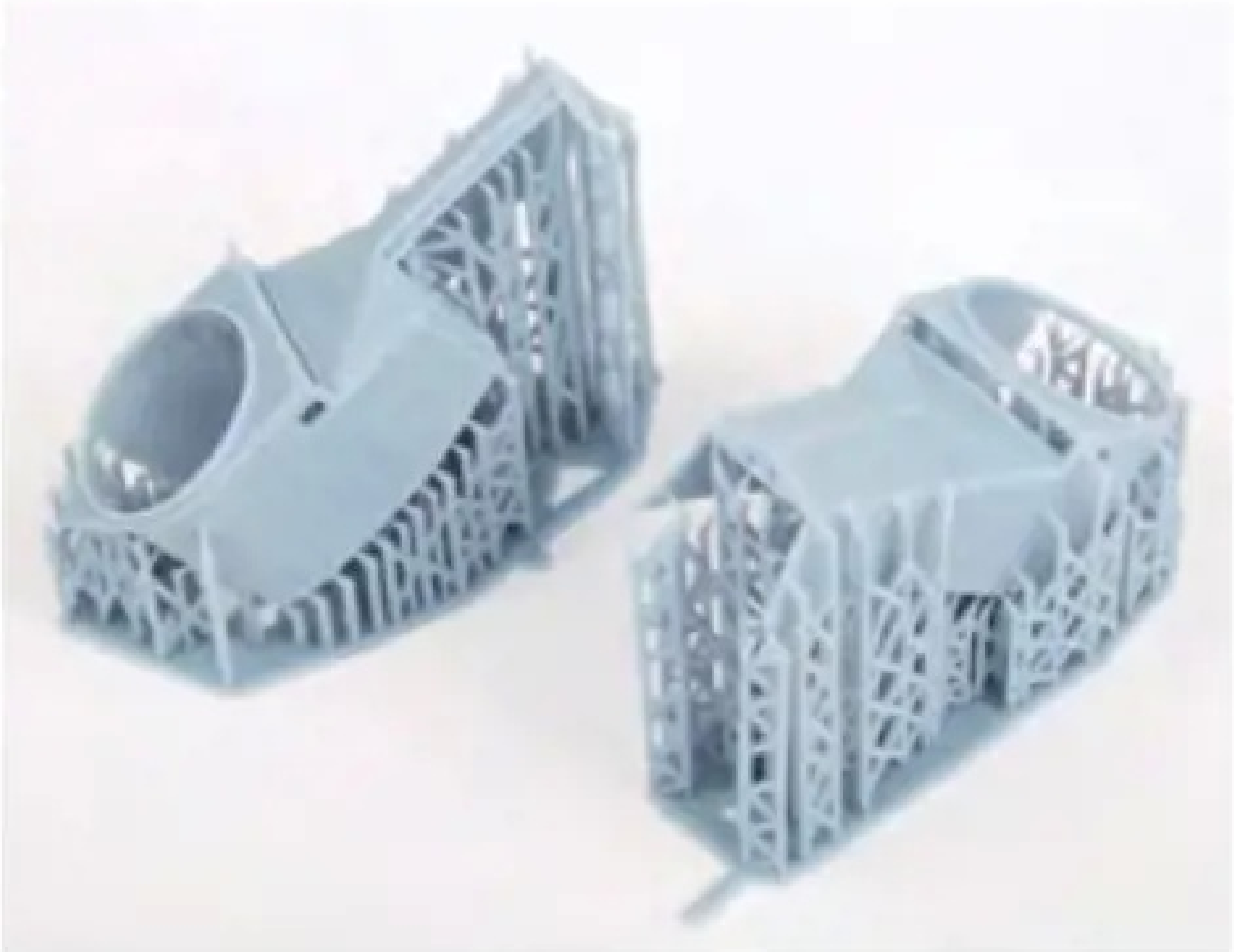
Great guns

Peaks Model's kits come with superb packaging, the parts (within their protective printing frames) sitting in a segmented foam insert. There are two versions, Classic and Premium Edition, with the latter offering a full engine and extra parts. The additions include a maintenance bench, oil can, tools, a spare tyre and machine gun, although they are not shown in the build stages, but merely on the front of the box.

British Armoured Car 1914
'POM-POM' prototype
WWI Collection
1/72 Scale
HIGH QUALITY RESIN KIT
PEAKS
MODEL



▲ Peaks Model's packaging is excellent, with the stiff foam insert holding the printing cages snugly. Note the small tabs on the cages, allowing easy lifting out from the surrounds.

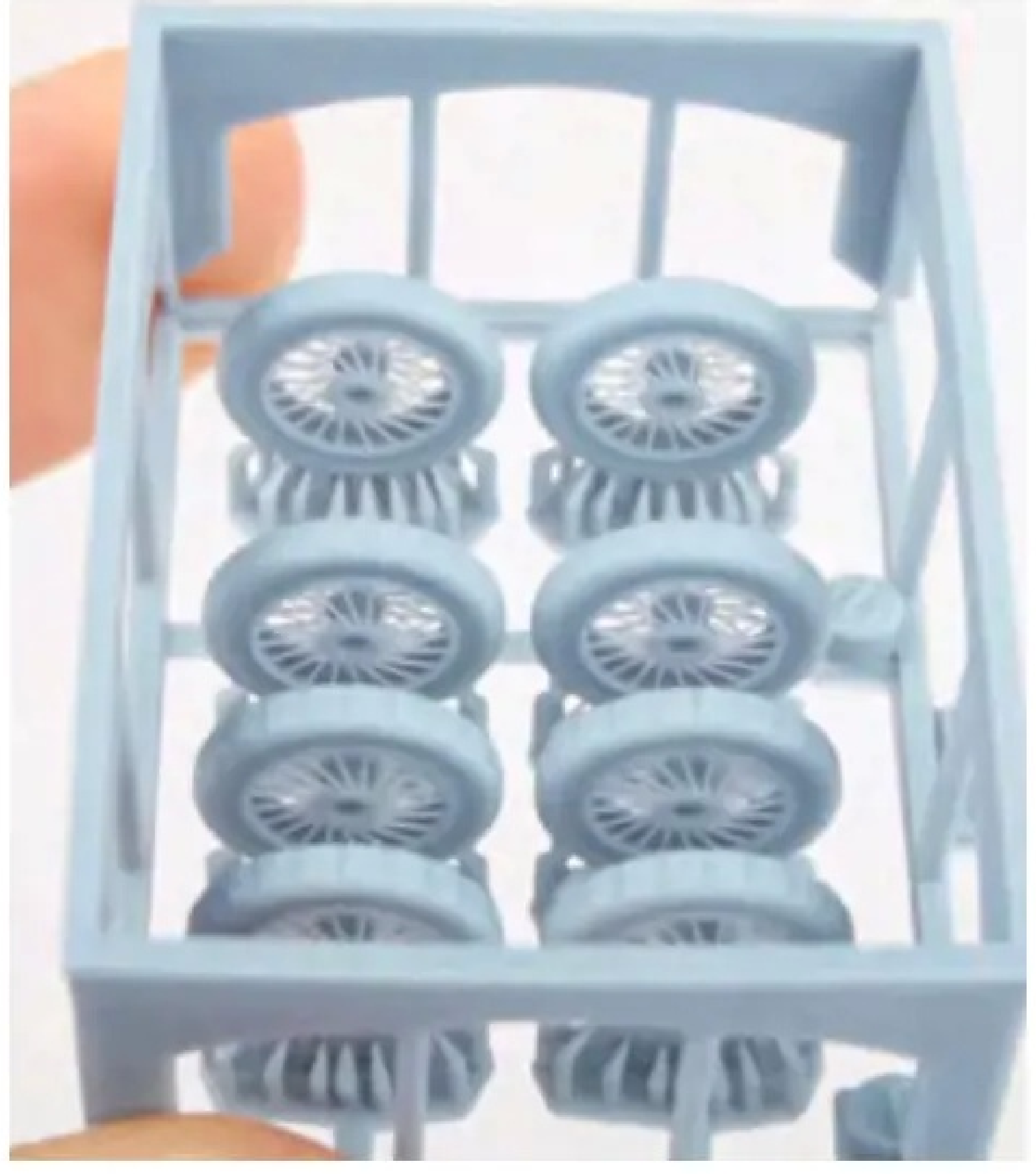


▲ Upper hulls for the Premium Vickers-armed car (left) and the Classic armoured car. The former has an open engine bay, ready to accommodate the powerplant and display it if desired.

The standard of design and printing is first rate and the detail sublime. There's a fully equipped driver station as part of the plank-floor with firewall, offering the seat, foot pedals, the steering wheel, gear lever and handbrake, and a dashboard with a decal for dial detail. Meanwhile, the jaw-dropping combined upper hull and engine-cover section features delicate open handles, fine bolt heads and convincing bonnet latches.

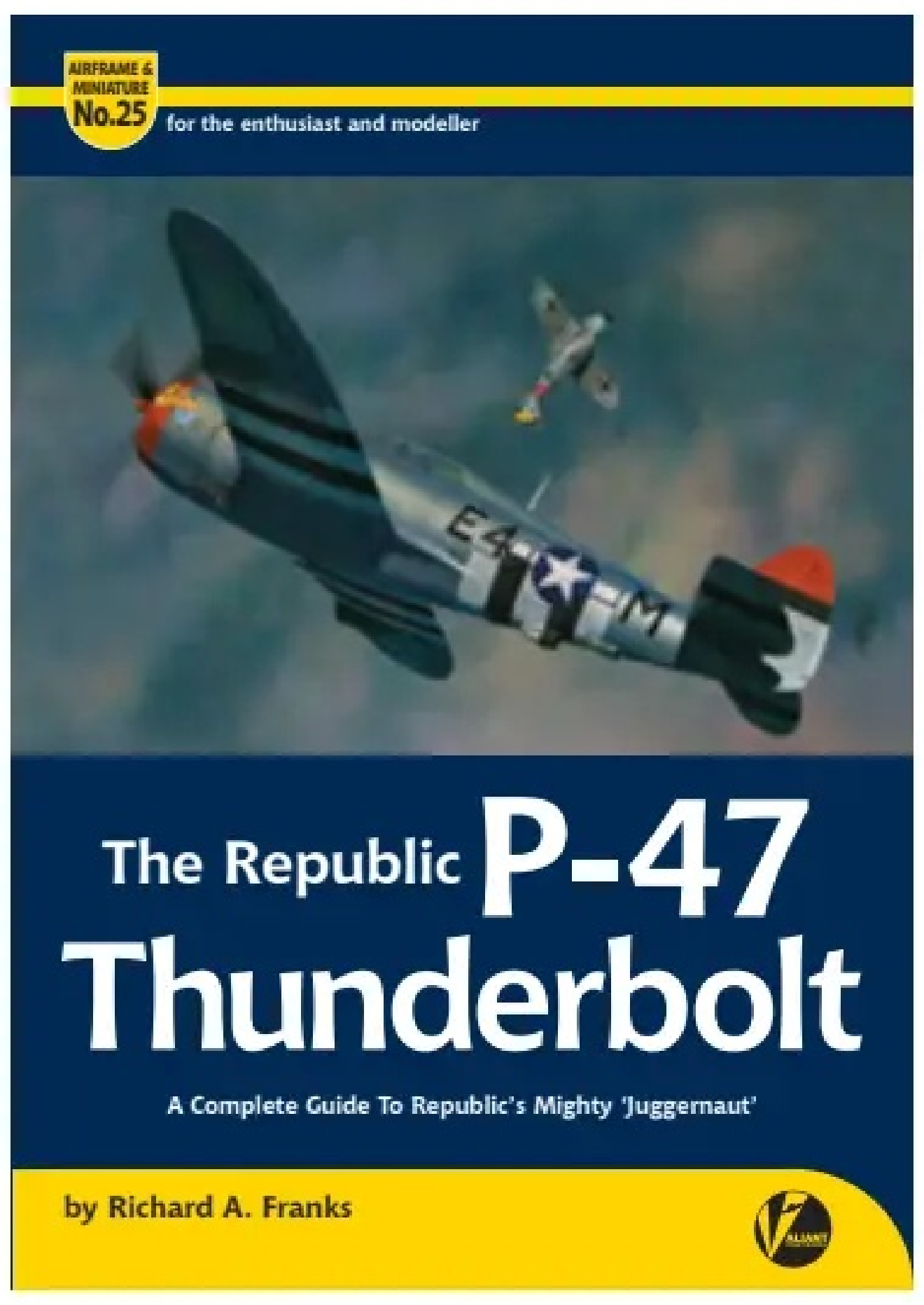
Arguably, the most impressive sub-assembly is the chassis, which comes as a single print with all features in situ. The Premium engine and radiator are printed separately, but both are stunning, the radiator fan being in situ on the engine. Other neatly created parts are the running boards with mudguards, stowage boxes, headlamps with clear acetate lenses, an open/closed front vision hatch, rear hull doors and a useful jig to help position the spare wheel. On that score, the wheels are excellent, all having super-fine spokes and visible tyre tread. There's even a separate starting handle.

The Pom-Pom-armed vehicle simply has an overall grey scheme, but the Vickers-equipped car offers, besides the same grey livery, two camouflaged LAMB examples. This a is hugely impressive debut, which should delight World War One modellers and military fans that prefer smaller scales. The Classic boxings are €50, while the Premium Editions cost €65 and both are available direct from Peaks Model (https://peaksmodel.com/)



▲ Incredibly fine spokes and tyre tread make the wheels impressive items.

REPUBLIC P-47 REFERENCE FROM VALIANT WINGS


AIRFRAME & MINIATURE No.25
for the enthusiast and modeller
The Republic P-47 Thunderbolt
A Complete Guide To Republic's Mighty 'Juggernaut'
by Richard A. Franks

VALIANT WINGS has been busy recently, releasing a new P-47 Thunderbolt volume, a revised edition on Westland's Lysander, plus reprints of books on the Focke-Wulf Fw 189 Uhu and Horten Ho 229.

The latest *Airframe & Miniature, Volume* 25, covers the mighty Republic P-47 Thunderbolt, and will include 272 pages of material on this hard-hitting World War Two fighter and ground-attack aircraft. The Airframe section provides more than 140 pages of technical information, walk-around and period photos, along with numerous extracts from technical manuals, plus guidance on camouflage and markings (with full-colour profiles). A variant guide highlights all the differences between production blocks, with helpful isometric drawings showing the changes.

There's also more than 40 pages for modellers, with kit reviews and builds, the latter including 1/72 and 1/48 subjects. Last, but not least, there's a superb set of fold-out scale drawings. With a cover price of just £28.95, this volume offers outstanding value for money.

Second Edition
The Westland Lysander
A Technical Guide
by Richard A. Franks
W6-K

With Airfix's Lysander proving hugely popular, it's an opportune time for Valiant Wings to revise and expand it's already excellent *Airframe Detail No.9* on the type, which now has 144 pages of high-quality reference material. New content includes a build of the Airfix kit, updated kitography (including accessories and decals) and an updated walk-around feature with 55 additional photos. *Airframe Detail No.9 The Westland Lysander* will retail for £21.95

If this wasn't enough, Valiant has announced a limited reprint of *Airframe Album No 6 – The Focke Wulf Fw 189 Uhu and Airframe Detail No 8 – The Horten Ho 229*, which are £20.95 and £17.95 respectively.

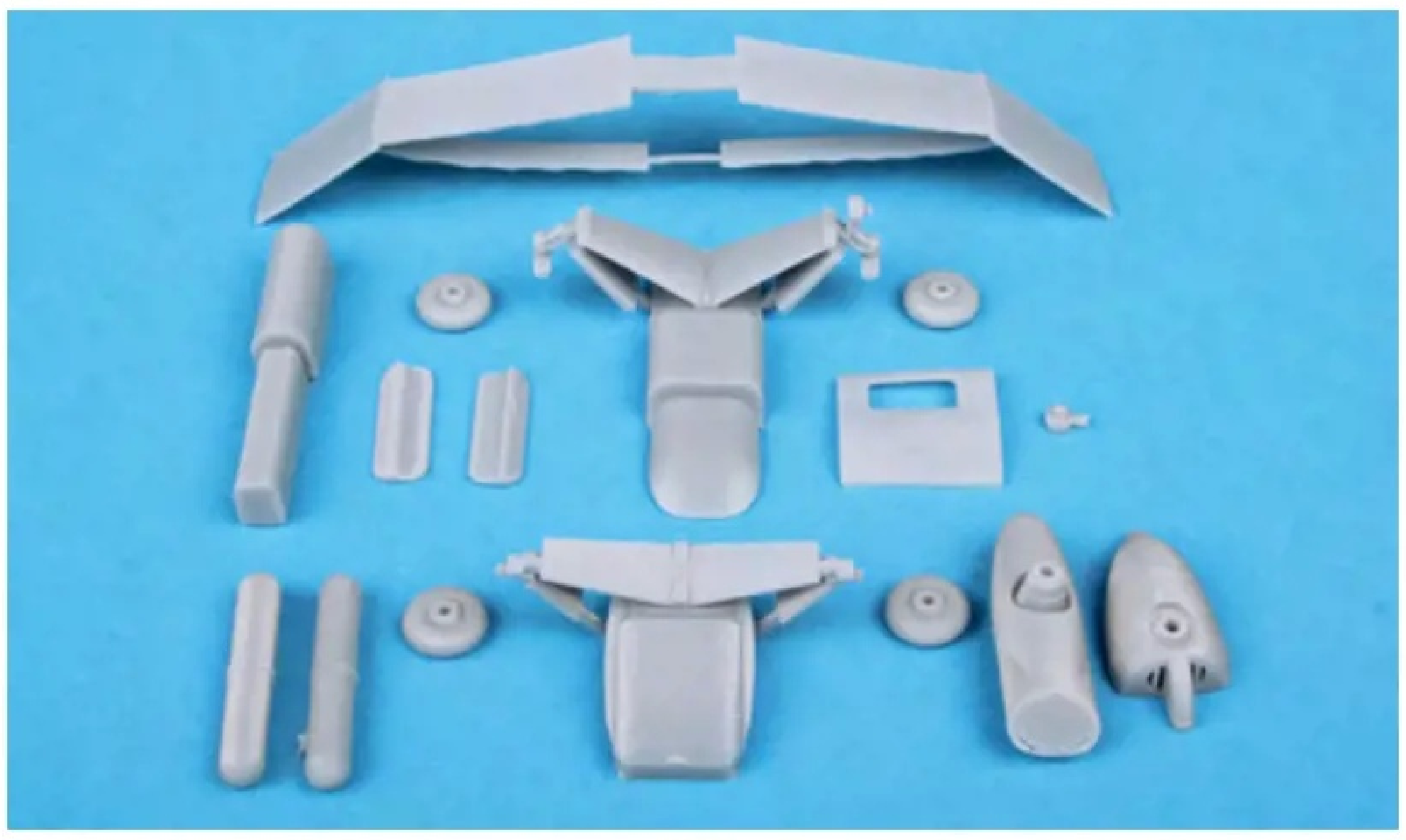
All four are available direct from Valiant Wings (www.valiant-wings.co.uk) along with more information on these and other publications.

THE DORSET PRINT MAN'S 1/72 BELVEDERE HC.1 CONVERSION

IF YOU'VE bought Airfix's recently reissued Vintage Classic Bristol 192 Belvedere (A03002V) but want to build an in-service RAF HC.1 airframe, then The Dorset Print Man's recent 3D-printed resin conversion set is well worth considering.

There are 16 components in total, comprising new undercarriage and fairings plus wheels, replacement upper rotor housings, air intakes and the type's distinctive rear 'wing'. Clear guidance is given on where to modify Airfix's styrene parts – which represent a prototype, rather than an in-service machine – and the result will be a markedly different Belvedere. Modellers can then add extra detail to their own tastes by scratch-building or kit-bashing.

The Bristol Belvedere 192 HC.1 conversion set is available direct from The Dorset Print Man (www.thedorsetprintman.com), priced at £25.



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TAMIYA'S NEW-TOOL 1/48 M5A1 STUART

TAMIYA
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U.S.A.
3051254-S
C-34
1/48
U.S. LIGHT TANK
M5A1 STUART

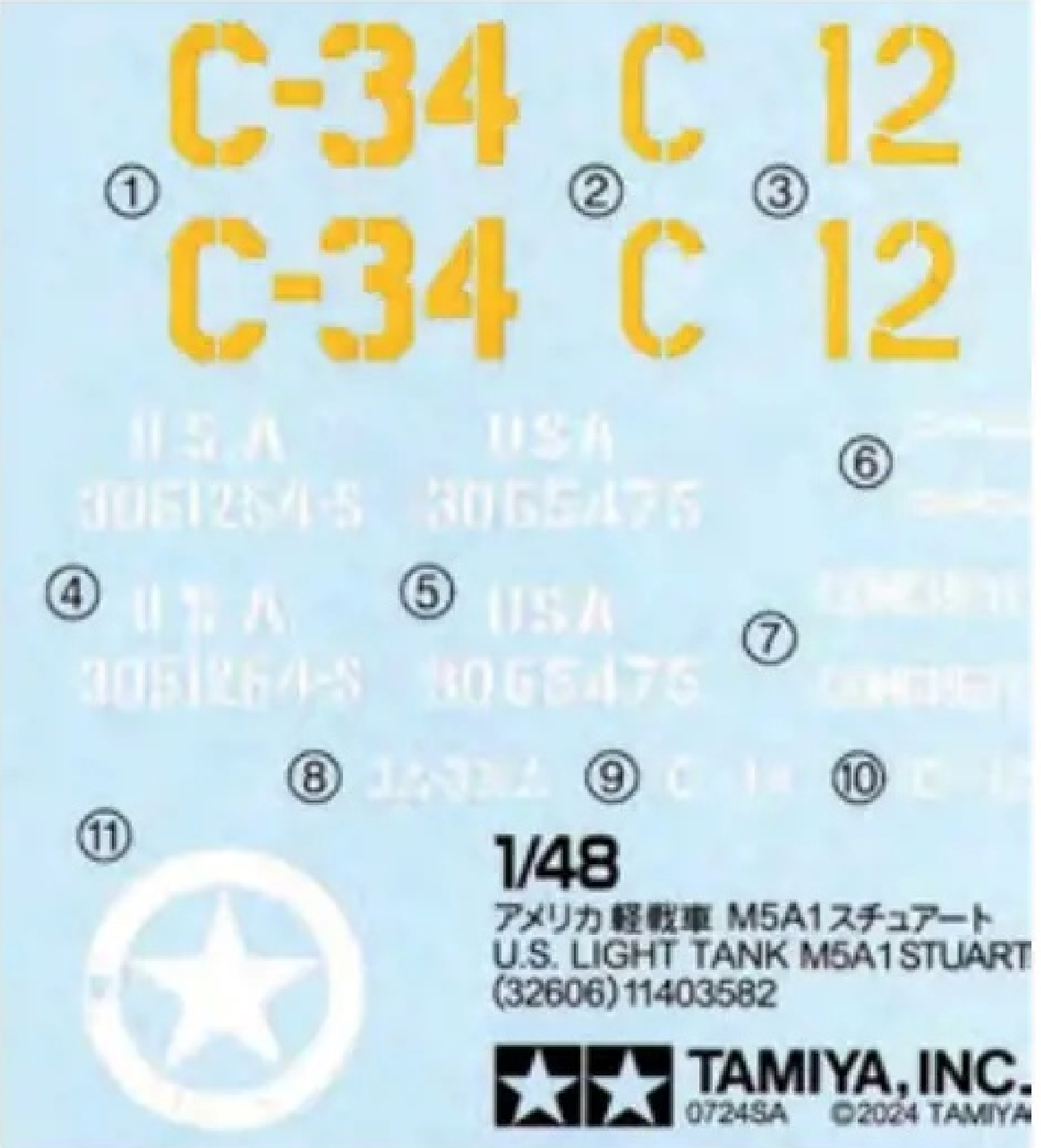
MILITARY KITS in 1/48 scale continue to grow in popularity, due to their cost and space-saving size. Yet there seems to be little or no sacrifice in detail. This is certainly the case with Tamiya's new-tool 1/48 M5A1 Stuart (32606), which offers four styrene runners, alloy weights and a length of string to replicate a towing cable.

Noticeable immediately is the quality of detail on the upper hull, which benefits from engine-screen mesh grilles with satisfying depth, plus well-rendered (closed) fuel filler caps, hatches and their hinges. It's clever how Tamiya incorporates the inner halves of the highly convincing suspension units on the hull sides, offering separate outer pieces to 'trap' the wheels, onto which are added link-and-length tracks. The link-end connectors are lovely for the scale and track grousers are present for mounting on the turret. Tamiya replicates Kelsey-Hayes stamped metal wheel covers and the return rollers are good facsimiles.

There's a pleasing cast-metal texture on the transmission cover and, at the opposite end, it's outstanding how Tamiya has moulded the engine doors with excellent hinges. Slide moulding means the main 37mm gun has a hollow muzzle, but the machine guns have solid muzzles. The turret itself has a separate hatch and Tamiya also offers a well-rendered partial commander figure, who sits on a small bracket that attaches to the inside of the turret roof. Decals for two Olive Drab-painted Stuarts are supplied:

- 3051254-S/C-34 *CAROL*, C Company, 33rd Armored Division, France, July 1944
- 3065475/C12 *CONCRETE*, C Company, 33rd Armored Division, France, July 1944

Tamiya's range of 1/48 military kits is huge now, and this Stuart is a fine addition, offering quality of detail not seen on some 1/35 kits. You can produce a lovely model straight from the box, with careful painting and weathering paying extra dividends. It's great value at £19.99, available from UK importer The Hobby Company (www.hobbyco.net) and official stockists.



X-SCALE'S NEW 1/144 LOCKHEED P-3C ORION

UKRAINIAN FIRM X-Scale's second foray into military aviation is a 1/144 Lockheed P-3C Orion. Through clever subject choices, X-Scale is now adapting some of its 1/144 civilian aircraft to provide military equivalents, with its P-3C Orion (X14007) following the firm's previous Lockheed L-188 Electra airliner.

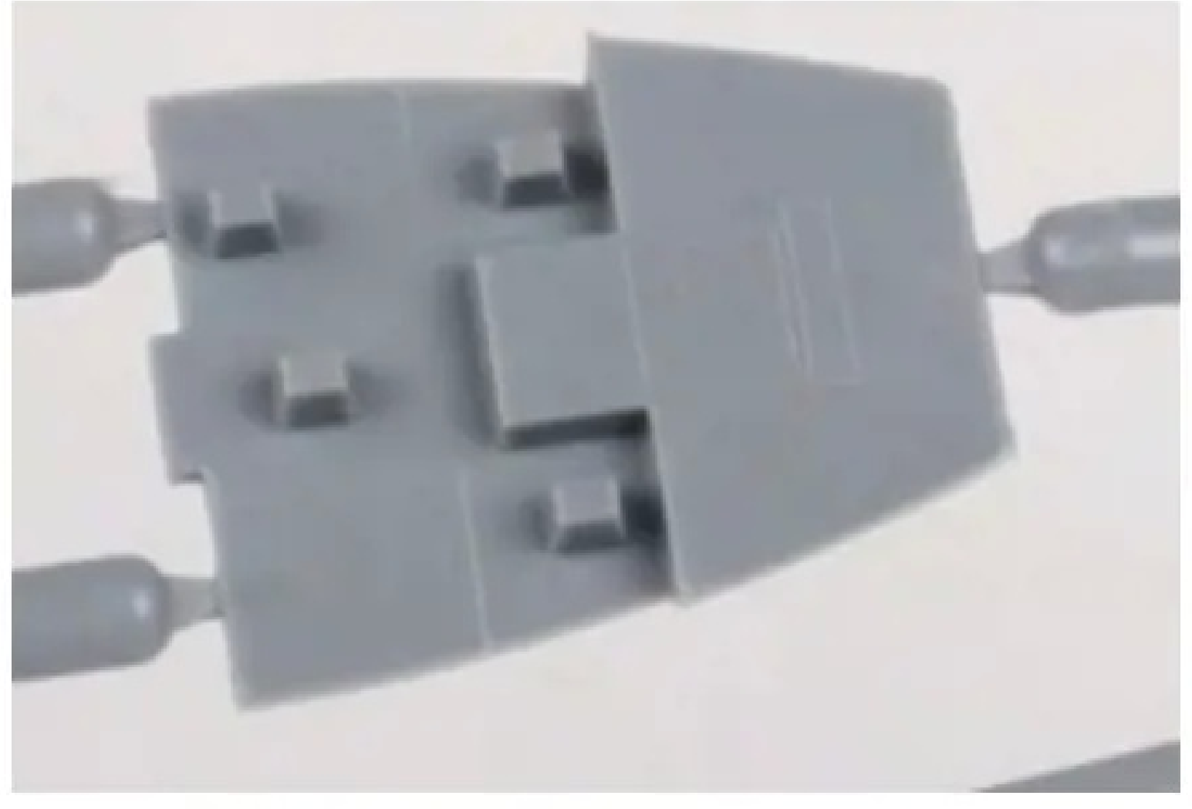
The P-3C is supplied on eight medium grey styrene runners, while a clear frame carries the windscreen and its surrounds plus the windows. Pleasingly, for the scale, a cockpit is provided and this involves a floor, rear bulkhead, seats, centre console and instrument panel. X-Scale's kits are classic limited-run products, lacking locating pins on most parts, but the moulding is first-class and there's beautifully fine panel-line engraving.

SCALE
1:144
160770
NAVY
P-3C ORION
TURBOPROP ANTI-SUBMARINE
AND MARITIME SURVEILLANCE AIRCRAFT
X144007

▲ X-Scale's P-3C fuselage halves are well moulded but lack locating pins.

There's a one-piece lower wing, which mates with separate upper halves – note that all flying control surfaces are moulded in situ. The engine nacelles are halved and the inboard units also receive a lower panel, which forms the main undercarriage bay surrounds. The halved Magnetic Anomaly Detector boom appears well shaped, as are the two-piece propeller spinners.

All undercarriage units are well-moulded with delicate detail and involve individually moulded retraction struts and torque scissors. Wheel-hub features are respectable for the scale, despite the hubs being a little shallow. There are two stores pylons per wing, and these each receive an AGM-84 Harpoon missile. X-Scale has done well in providing interesting and varied colour schemes by representing export (Australia, Japan and The Netherlands) and US Navy airframes. A properly busy decal sheet is provided, the markings having thin, gloss carrier film and excellent register. X-Scale's 1/144 P-3C should satisfy fans of maritime patrol aircraft and is available direct (www.x-scalemodels.com) for $32.


▲ A cockpit floor is supplied and this gains seats, an instrument panel, centre console and rear bulkhead

TAMIYA'S 1/24 NEW-TOOL PORSCHE 911 GT3 RS (992)

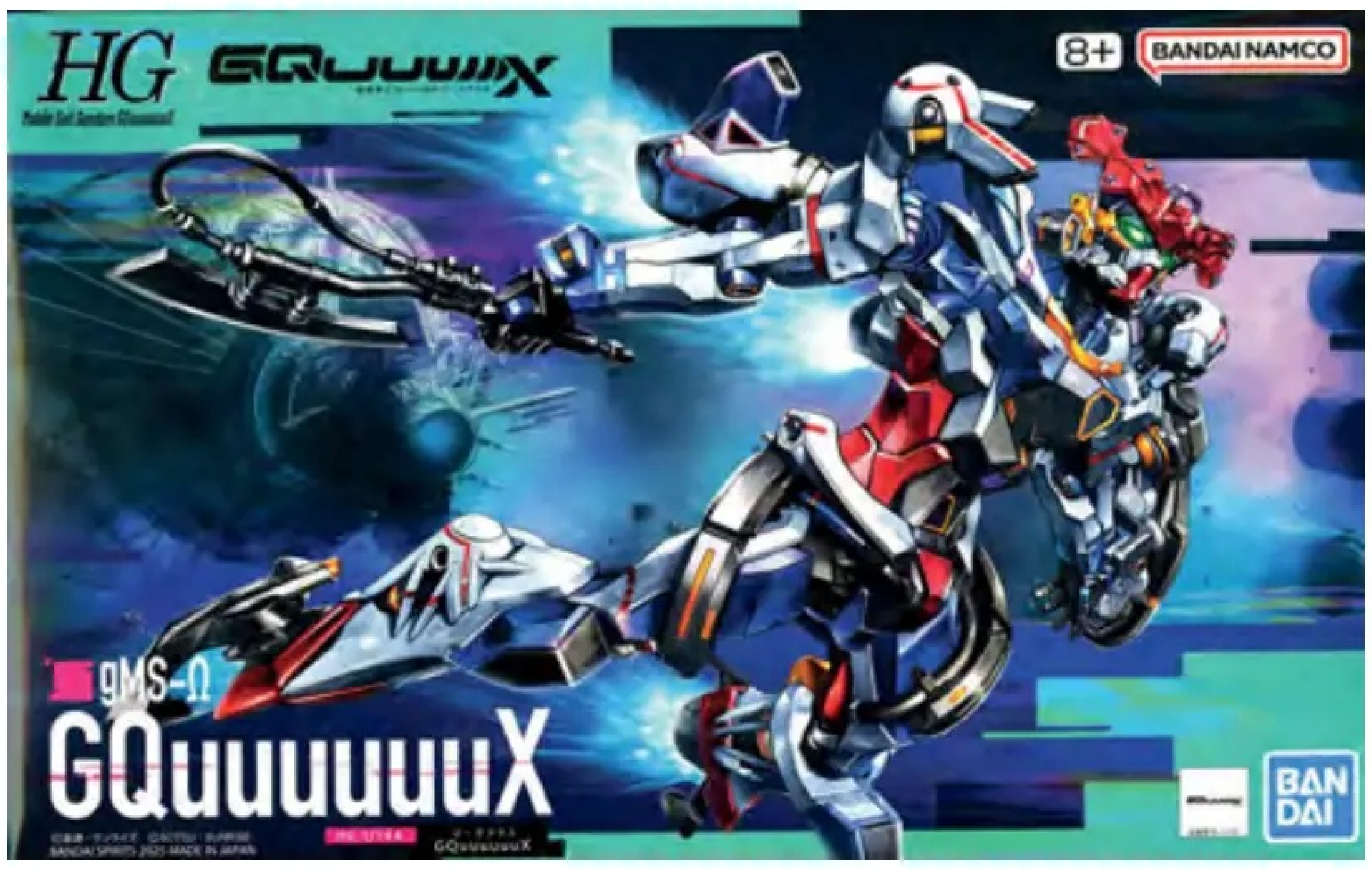
TAMIYA
PORSCHE
911 GT3 RS
(992)

A top speed of 184mph and a price tag that *starts* at an eye-watering £192,600. That's the Porsche 911 GT3 RS. Thankfully, Japan's Tamiya has now made a more affordable replica of this quality 4.0-litre supercar with its latest 1/24 auto release (24370).

Open the box and there's nothing to surprise Tamiya auto diehards: beautifully moulded styrene, well-printed decals, self-adhesive tape paint masks and rubber tyres. The company appears to have aced it in terms of accuracy, with every angle and curve captured faithfully. Aside from the bodyshell and a same-shade runner carrying items such as the wheels, suspension and the like, there are three runners of black parts. Here you'll find the interior tub and doorcards, floorpan, steering wheel and other components. The dashboard/coaming part is a faithful facsimile, having the rev counter and digital screens in decal form, plus moulded air vents and buttons. It's quite something how Tamiya has moulded the busy engine cover, with its super-thin raised 'blades' and mesh being replicated beautifully. Other impressive features include the MacPherson strut suspension uprights and the full-depth ten-spoke wheels with their low-profile treaded tyres.

Car modellers are provided with a stunning, highly accurate scale rendition here, and the kit is excellent value at £39.99, being available direct from The Hobby Company (www.hobbyco.net) and Tamiya stockists.

ALL-NEW HIGH-GRADE GUNDAM GQUUUUUUX FROM BANDAI



JAPANESE FIRM Bandai has released a 1/144 scale kit of the titular Mobile Suit Gundam GQuuuuuuX (pronounced Gee-Kwah-ks) piloted by female high-school student Amate Yuzuriha in it's latest TV series. It's a High-Grade product (one step up from the Entry Grade) and is aimed at beginner/intermediate modellers.

Set in an alternative universe where the initial enemy, the Principality of Zeon, defeated Earth forces, this new mobile suit (Item #5068317) is more organic in appearance than the classic RX-78 design, and the manner in which Bandai has replicated its form is commendable. As with all other Gundam kits, parts are moulded in coloured styrene, with seven runners in total – one of which features light blue, dark blue, metallic and orange components – while markings are provided in self-adhesive sticker form. All joints are articulated, and there's no need for glue when assembling the kit. Options include an open/closed head array, plus a choice of Beam Sabre, Beam Rifle, Tomenosuke Heat Hawk (an axe-like weapon) or a shield. There's also a backpack with rockets.

Bandai's 1/144 gMS-Ω GQuuuuuuX will retail for £19.99, making it great value. More on this and other Gundam is available from the official UK Bandai importer at https://shop.bandai.co.uk/

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AG9156A - Work Sation
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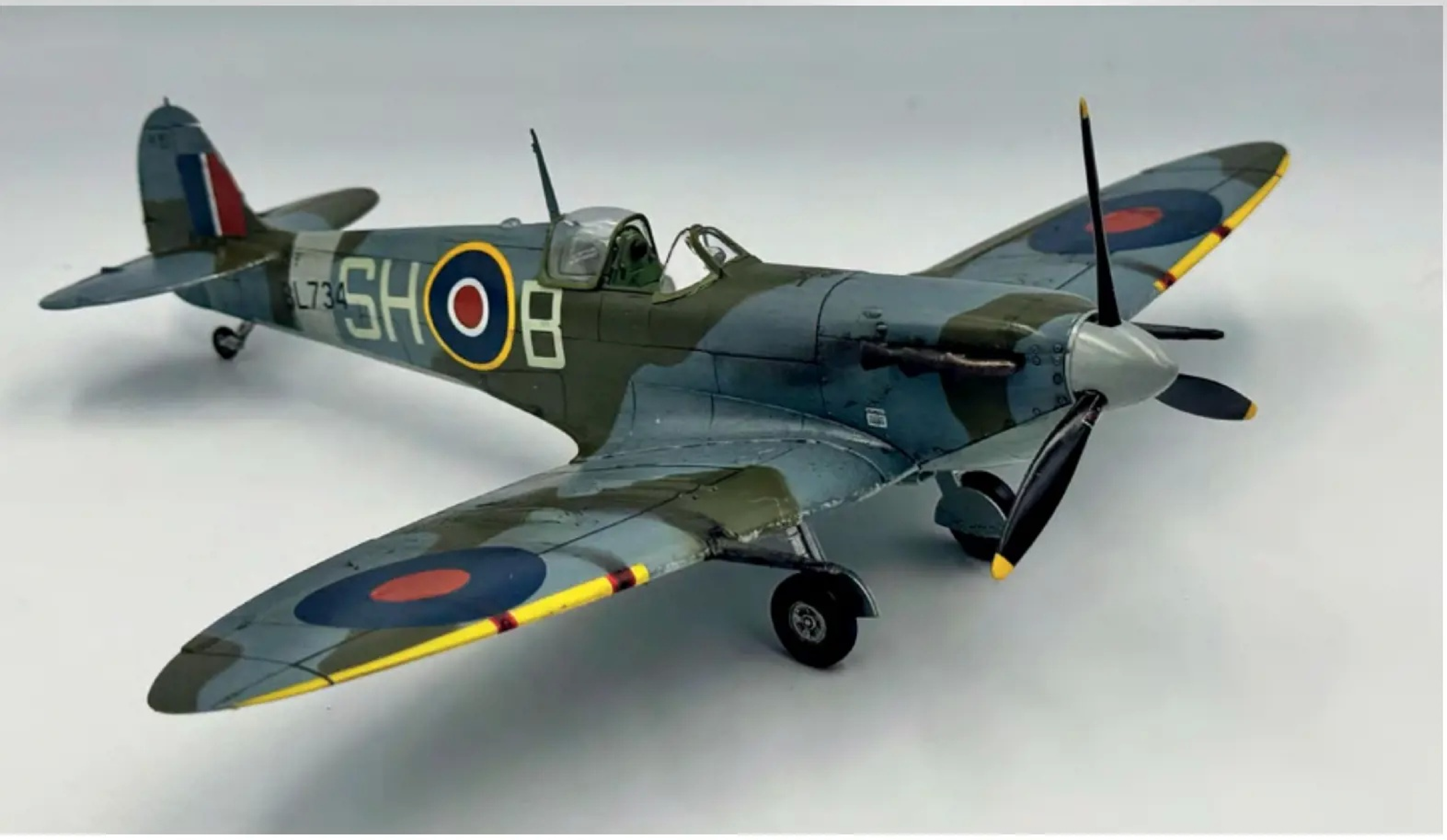
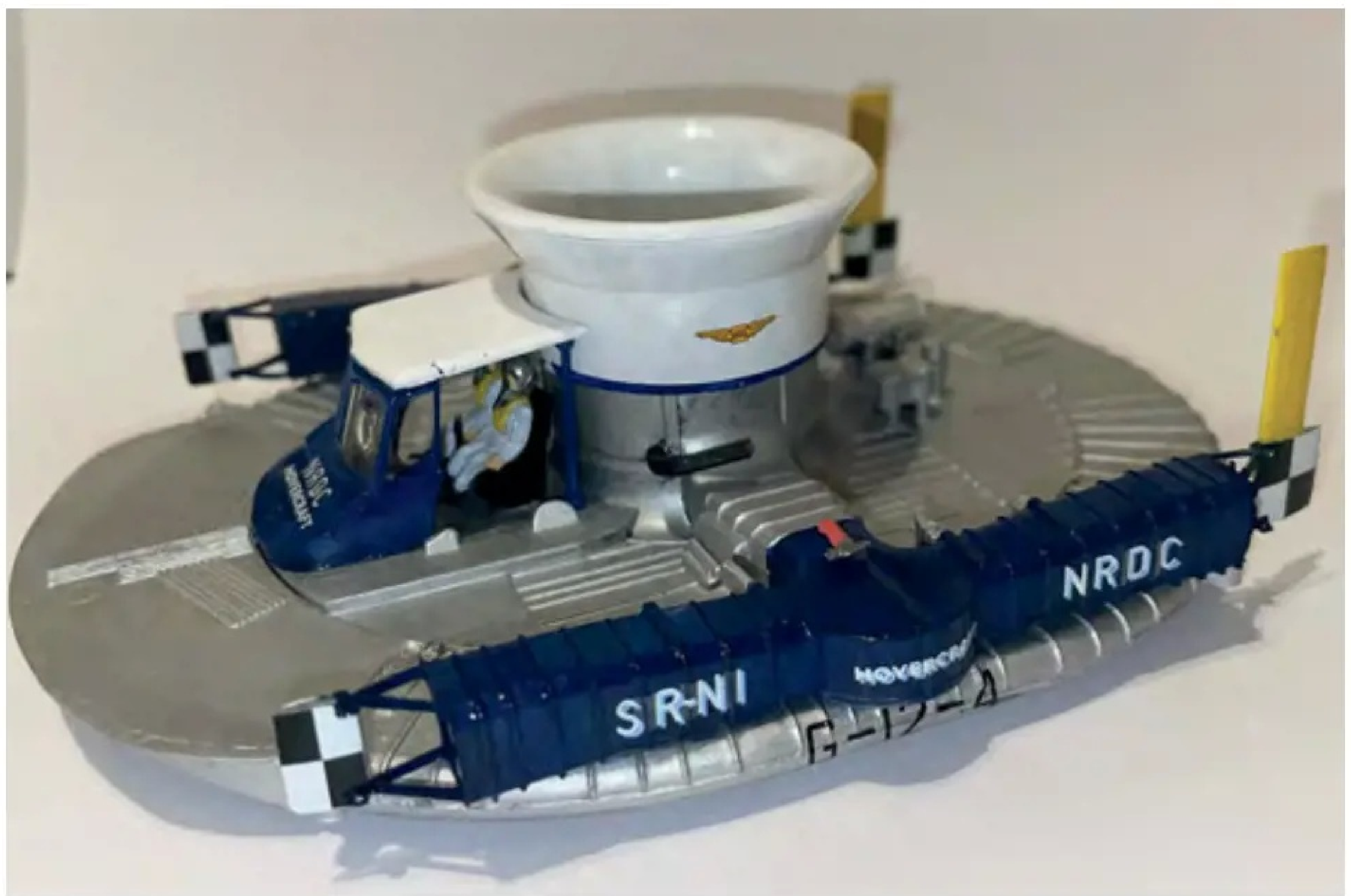
DISPLAY CASE

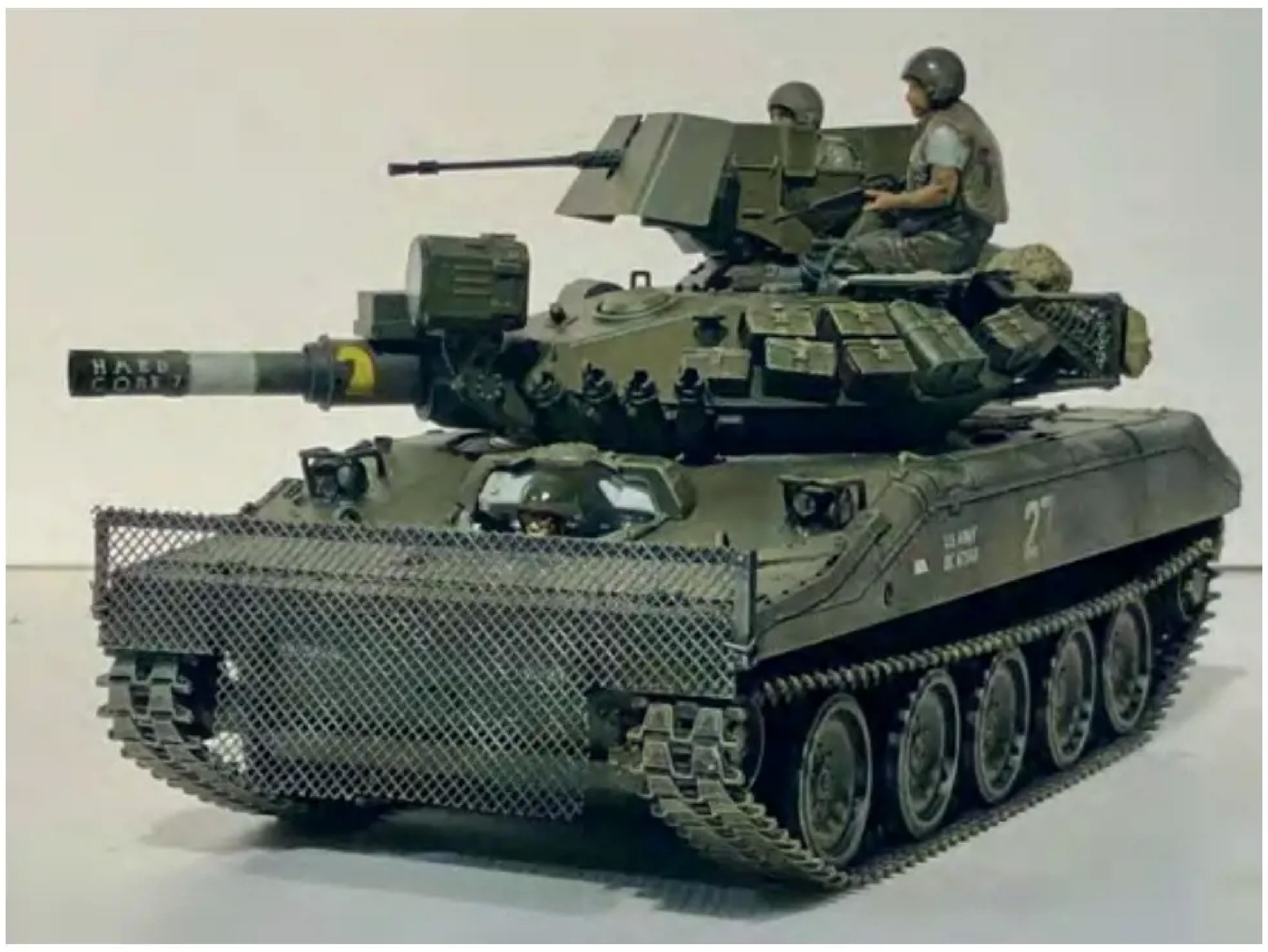
From tanks to hovercraft, this month's Display Case builds cover a broad range of genres, with out-of-the-box models being rather popular.



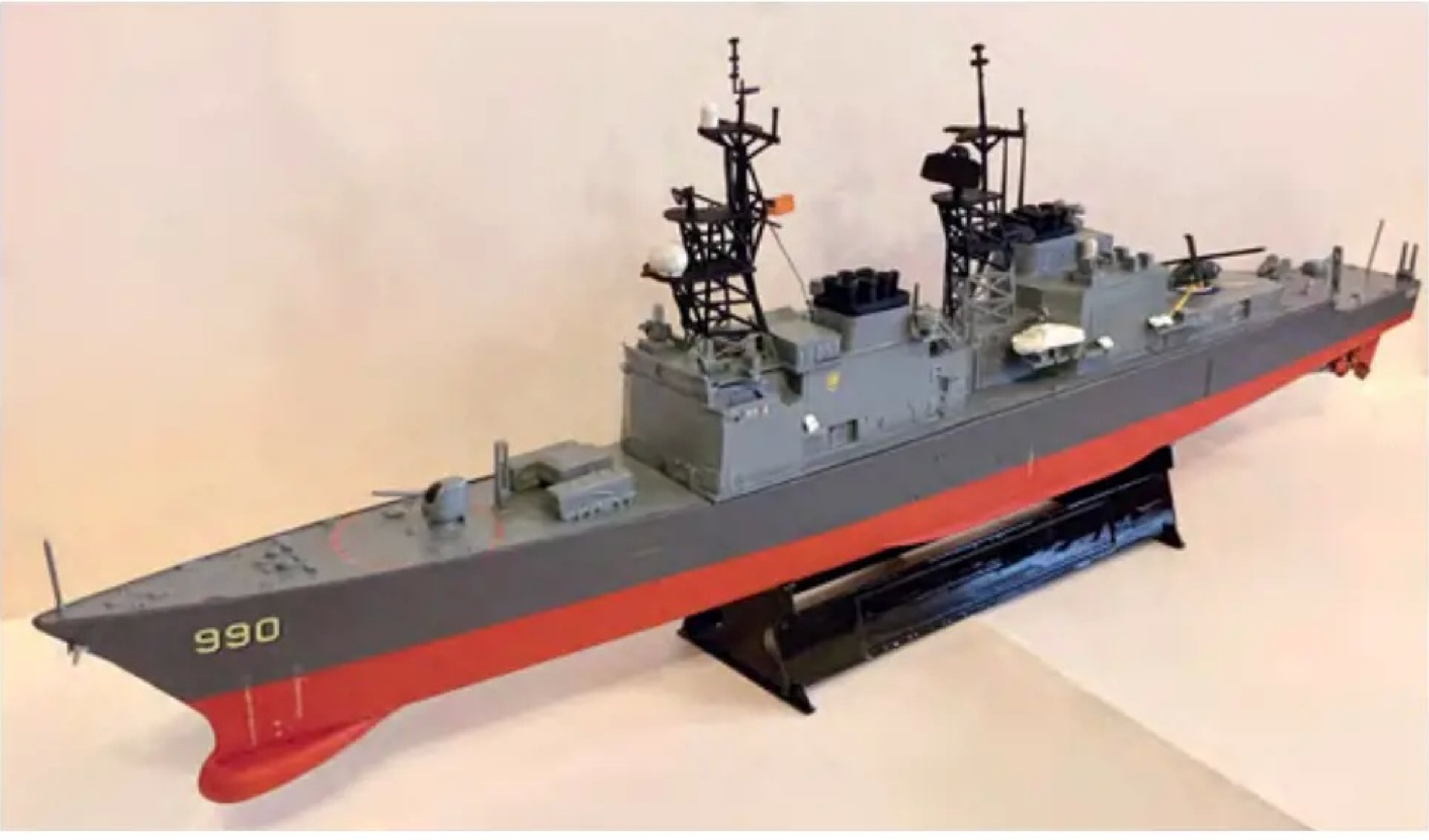
◀ This delightful Airfixc 1/48 Spitfire Mk.Vb was one of several builds by Lawrence Bassett and his local IPMS Plymouth Scale Model Association for the local RAF Harrowbeer Education and Heritage Centre. It has formed part of a display on RAF Search and Rescue Squadrons during World War Two and the museum has been helping the club with reference material and pilot information. This Spitfire Mk.Vb was completed in 64 Squadron markings and was flown by the-then Flying Officer Ioannis Agorastos 'John' Plagis.

▼ This Airfix Vintage Classics 1/72 SR-N1 Hovercraft was built straight from the box by Richard Barber, who brush-painted the model with Humbrol and Tamiya acrylics.





▲ Tamiya's 1/35 M551 Sheridan was the subject of this recent build by Ewe Gen Lim, who described it as a beautiful kit, which was assembled straight from the box. He finished it as *Hard Core 7*, which was an 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment machine, adding weathering to the ammunition boxes, jerrycans, and hull.



◀ Duncan Bower built this splendid 1/350 USS *Ingersoll* guided-missile destroyer using the Mini Hobby Model kit, which comes with revolving propshafts and an engine sound. The project was more challenging than expected due to the instructions being in just Chinese.

Submit YOUR project!

Want to feature your recently finished project in *AMW*? Send us a high-quality photo of your model against a white background and tell us about any aftermarket products or special techniques to: **stuart.fone@keypublishing.com**

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'65 PONTIAC GTO
2 in 1
STOCK/ORDINAIRE
CUSTOM/COUTUME

1965 Pontiac GTO 2-in-1
PKAMT1191M **1:25**

USA-1
CHEVY SILVERADO MONSTER TRUCK

USA-1 Chevy Silverado Monster Truck
PKAMT1191M **1:25**

Jolly Green Gasser

1965 Ford Galaxie Jolly Green Gasser Car
PKAMT1192 **1:25**

Wild Hoss
1:25 SCALE ford BRONCO 4x4

1978 Ford Bronco 4x4 "Wild Hoss"
PKAMT1304 **1:25**

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Stingaree Custom Dragster Car
PKAMT1259 **1:25**

amt 68
Plymouth ROAD RUNNER

1968 Plymouth Road Runner Car
PKAMT1363 **1:25**

'62 IMPALA
CONVERTIBLE

1962 Chevy Impala Convertible
PKAMT1355M **1:25**

1957 Chevy Bel Air "Pepper Shaker" Silent Box
PKAMT1360 **1:25**

amt
OFFICIAL
1969 FORD GALAXIE

1969 Ford Galaxie Hardtop
PKAMT1373 **1:25**

'60 CORVETTE

1960 Chevrolet Corvette
PKAMT1374 **1:25**

'51 CHEVY FLEETLINE
BUILD STOCK OR CUSTOM

1951 Chevy Fleetline
PKAMT1378 **1:25**

1967 MERCURY COMET CYCLONE GT
AUTHENTIC KIT

1967 Mercury Comet Cyclone GT
PKAMT1386 **1:25**

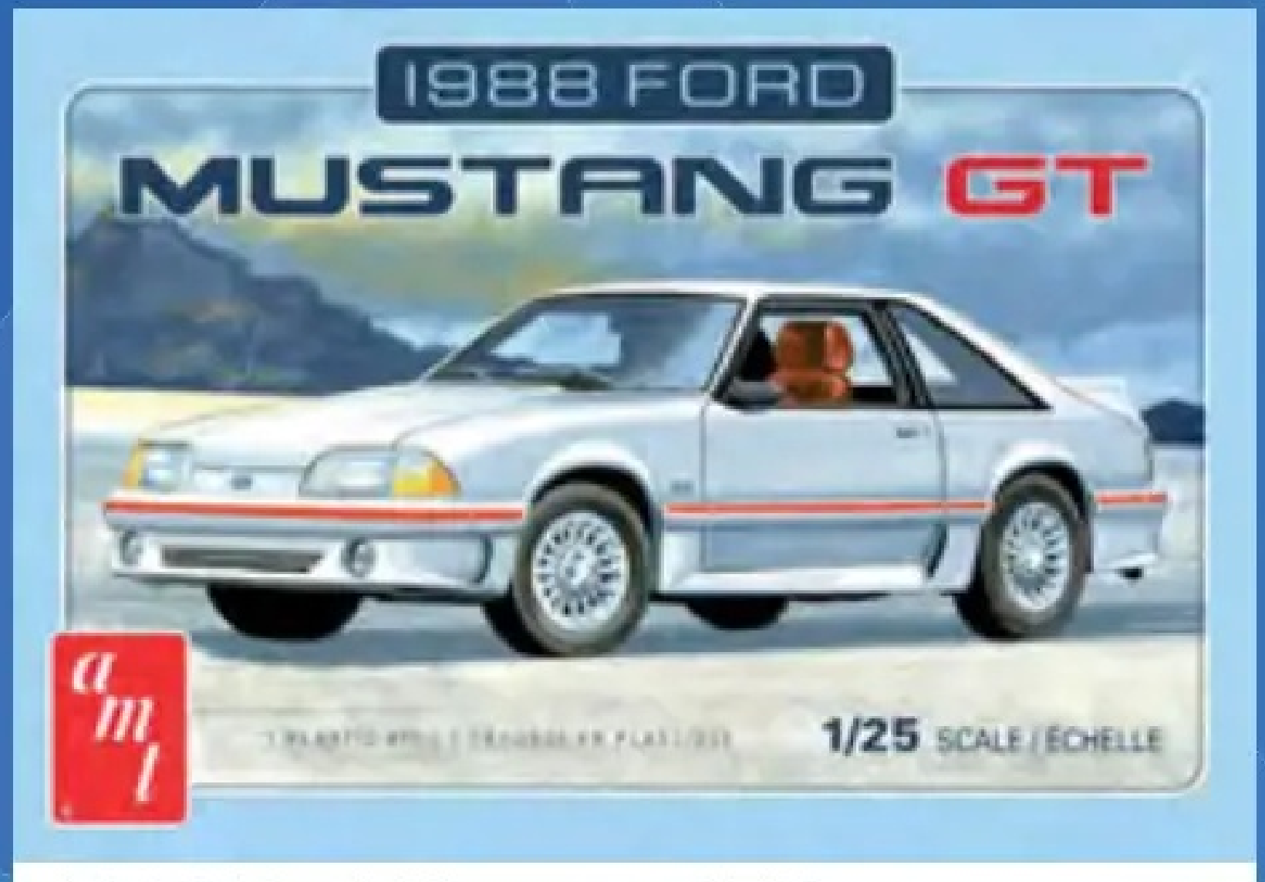
TOUCH TONE TERROR
Dodge
HEMI
CANOPY & TENT

1966 Dodge A100 Pickup "Touch Tone Terror"
PKAMT1389 **1:25**

1966 Ford Galaxie 500 HT "Sweet Bippy"
PKAMT1393 **1:25**

'59 CADILLAC AMBULANCE

1959 Cadillac Ambulance w/ Gurney
PKAMT1395 **1:25**


1988 FORD MUSTANG GT
1/25 SCALE/ECHELLE

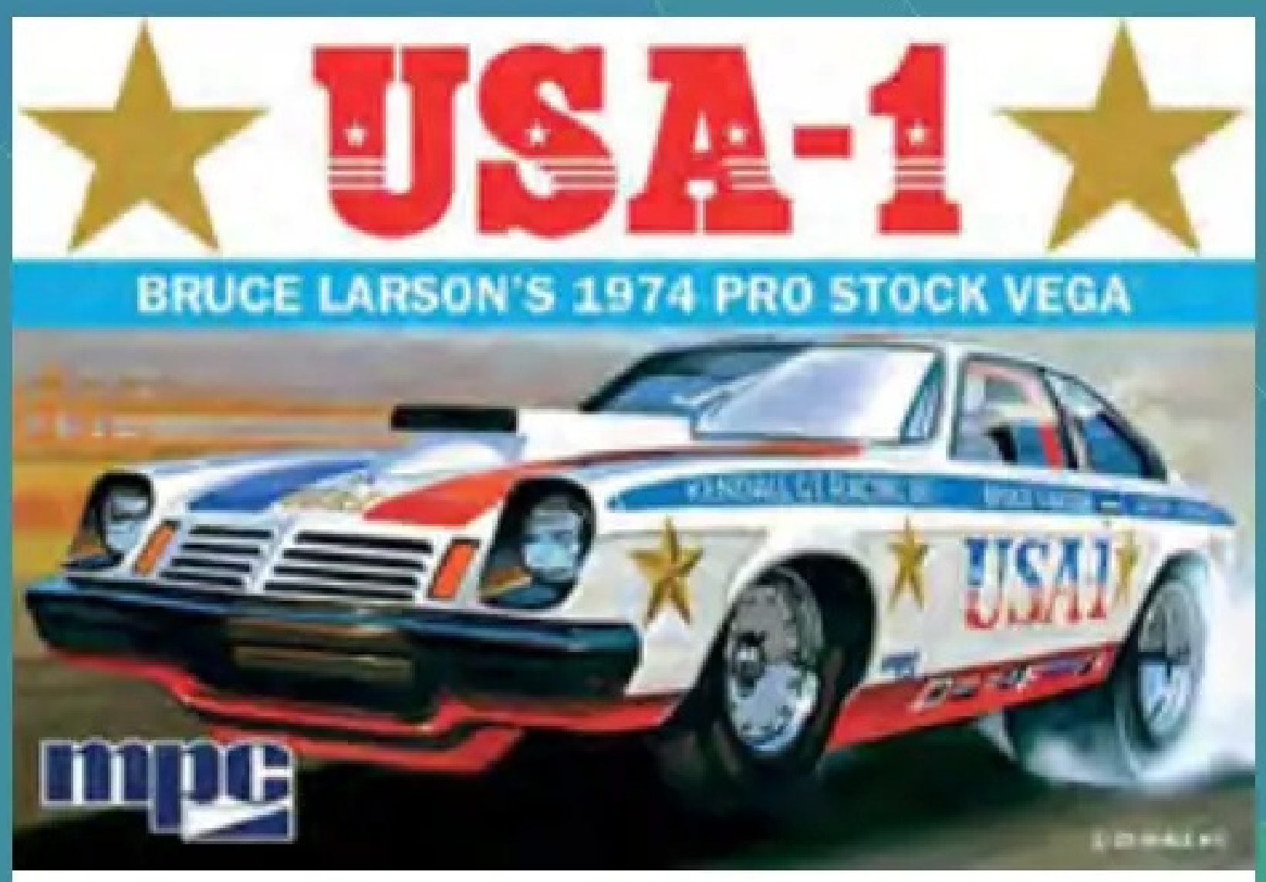
1988 Ford Mustang GT Car
PKAMT1216M **1:25**

1961 FORD GALAXIE HARDTOP
3 in 1
STOCK
CUSTOM
ADVANCED CUSTOM

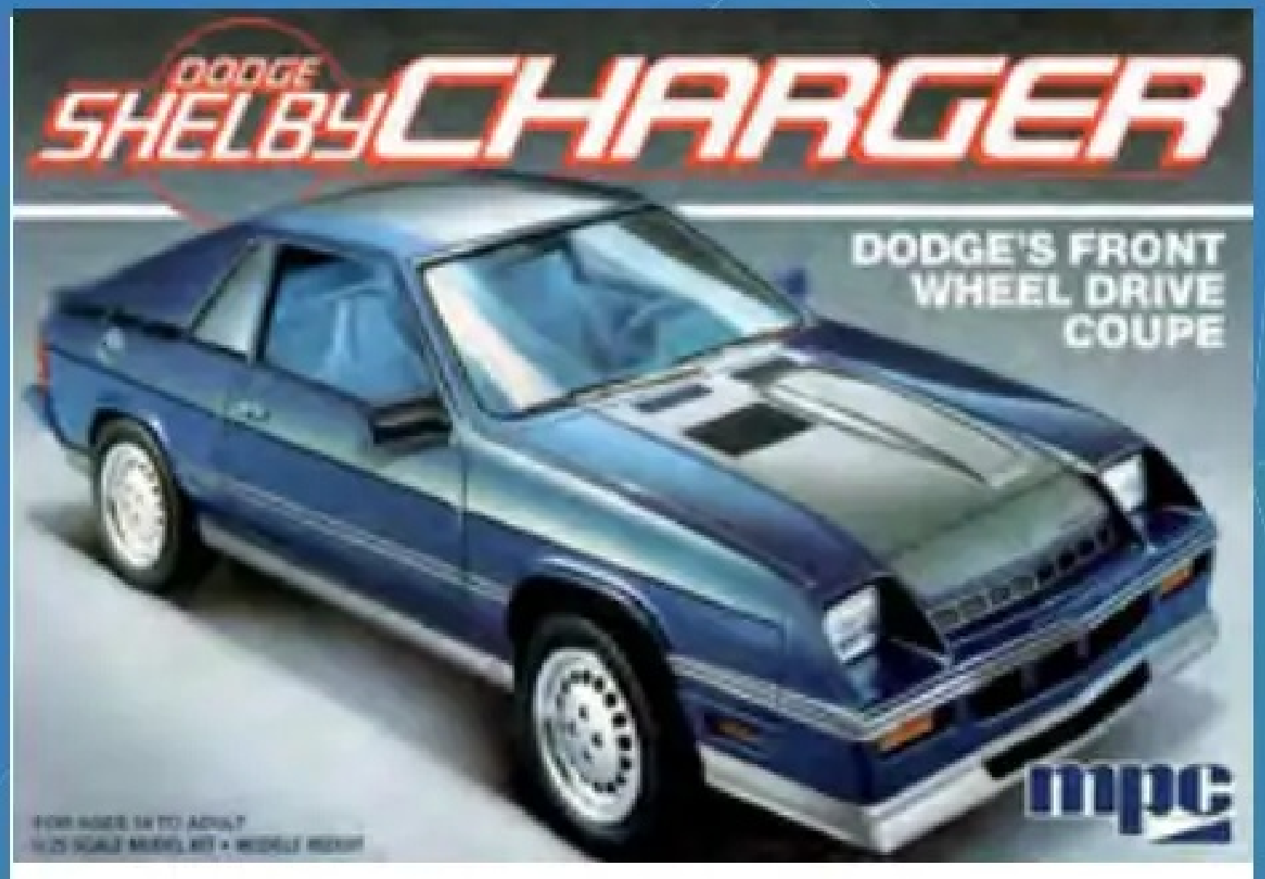
1961 Ford Galaxie Hardtop
PKAMT1430 **1:25**

1966 OLDSMOBILE 442 W-30
HARDTOP
GO!
ALLER!

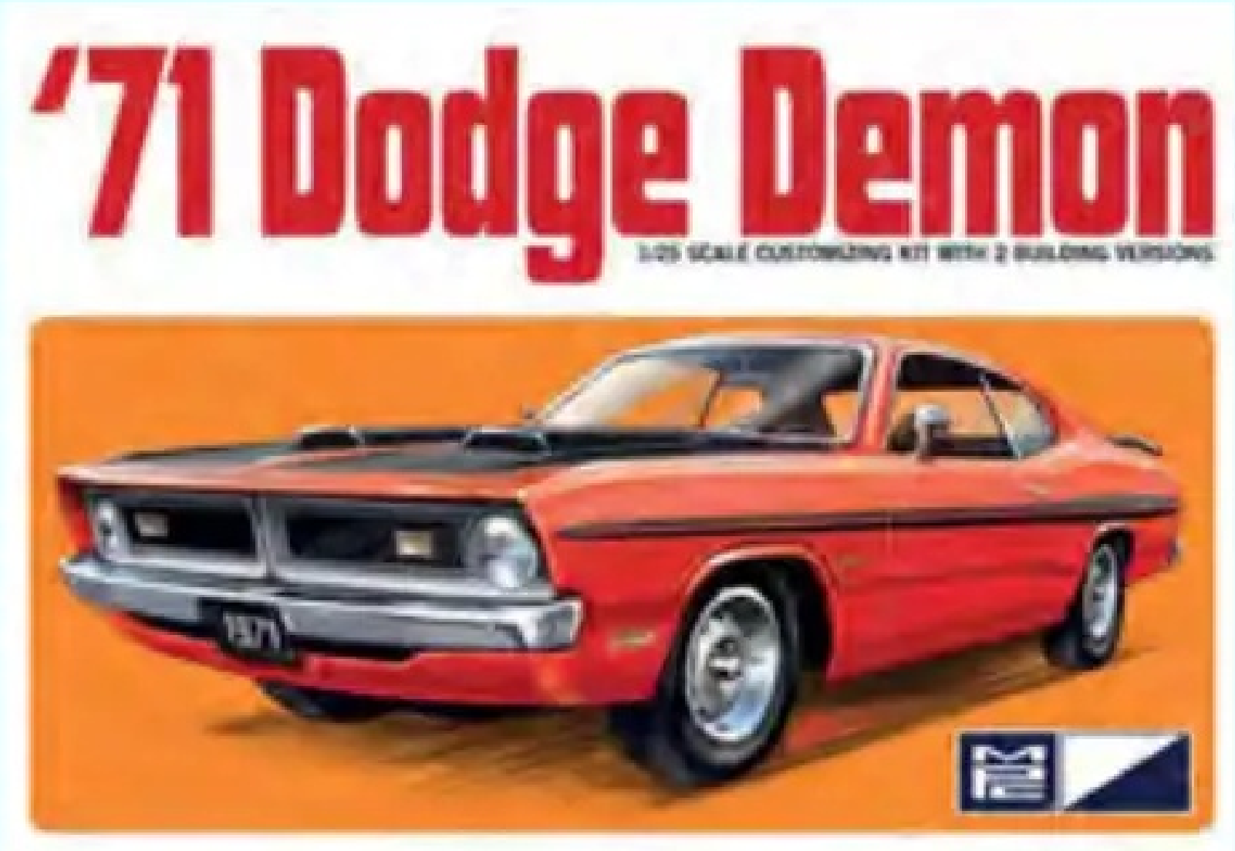
1966 Oldsmobile 442 W-30 Hardtop
PKAMT1432M **1:25**


USA-1
BRUCE LARSON'S 1974 PRO STOCK VEGA
mpc

USA-1 Bruce Larson's 1974 Pro Stock Vega
PKMPC828 **1:25**


DODGE SHELBY CHARGER
DODGE'S FRONT WHEEL DRIVE COUPE
mpc

1986 Dodge Shelby Charger
PKMPC987 **1:25**


'71 Dodge Demon

1971 Dodge Demon
PKMPC997 **1:25**

mpc
1/25 SCALE
7-1
1960 CHEVROLET Corvette

1960 Chevrolet Corvette 7-in-1
PKMPC1002 **1:25**

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476/25

CELESTIAL STARFIGHTER

Chris Jones transforms Kinetic's 1/48 F-104G into a rocket-powered NF-104A aerospace trainer with Hypersonic Models' conversion set.

The distinctive F-104 Starfighter is particularly well known among aviation enthusiasts. It is, arguably, famous and infamous in equal measure. With a needle-like fuselage, stub wings, and Mach 2 capability, the type's 'missile with a man in it' nickname was certainly well deserved. Coupled with wing leading edges so sharp you could cut yourself on them, and a propensity for accidents that give it a reputation as a 'widow maker', the F-104 epitomised speed, danger and excitement.

However, one of the lesser-known facts about the Starfighter is that it was used to train astronauts. In the early 1960s a small number of F-104As were converted to NF-104A Aerospace Trainers, equipped with a rocket motor and a hydrogen peroxide Reaction Control System (RCS), the so called 'puffer jets' used to orientate spacecraft in the vacuum of space. The rocket motor allowed these converted F-104s to reach extraordinary altitudes, where the atmosphere was so thin that conventional control surfaces were almost ineffective. USAF documents state they could routinely exceed 100,000ft and provided around 90 seconds of negative G flight and RCS experience, all vital training for the astronauts of the future. In 1963, an unofficial altitude record of 120,800ft was reached by Major R W Smith. The NF-104A Starfighter also became infamous from the 'Chuck' Yeager spin incident… popularised in the 1983 film *The Right Stuff*. The aircraft involved, 56-0762, is the airframe represented here.

New identity

Hypersonic's conversion is an impressive package, containing a plethora of multi-media parts with 3D-printed resin, injection-moulded plastic, photo-etched

MODEL SPEC

NF-104A Conversion Set
By: Hypersonic Models
Stock code: HMR 48061
Scale: 1/48
Price: £48.97
Available from: www.hypersonicmodels.com

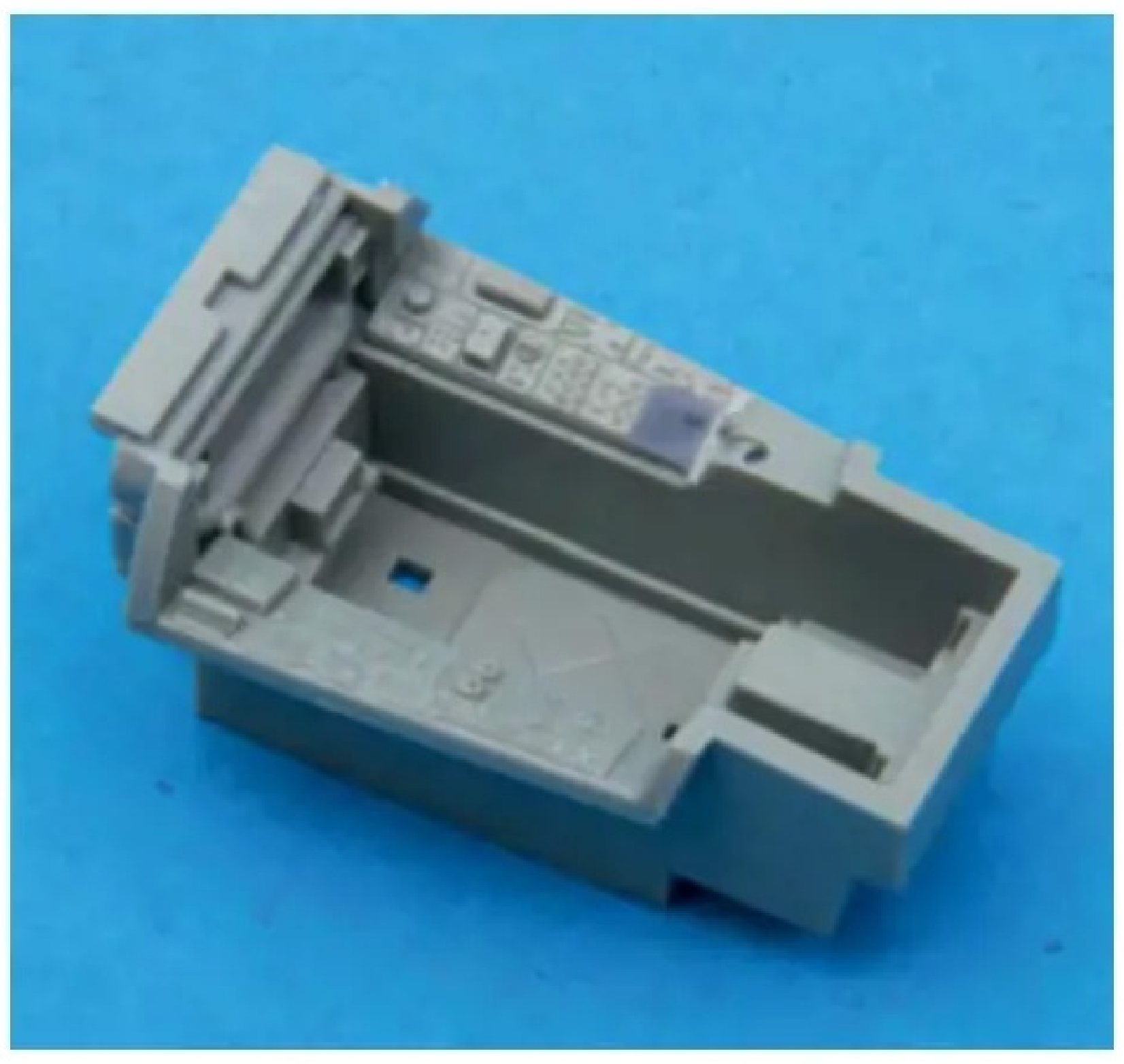
HYPERSONIC models
NF-104A Conversion Set
HMR 48061
Contains:
• 3D printed resin parts
• Injection moulded plastic parts
• Turned brass pitot boom (by Master Model)
• Caracal Models CD48233 decals
Kinetic F-104G kit not included

MODEL SPEC

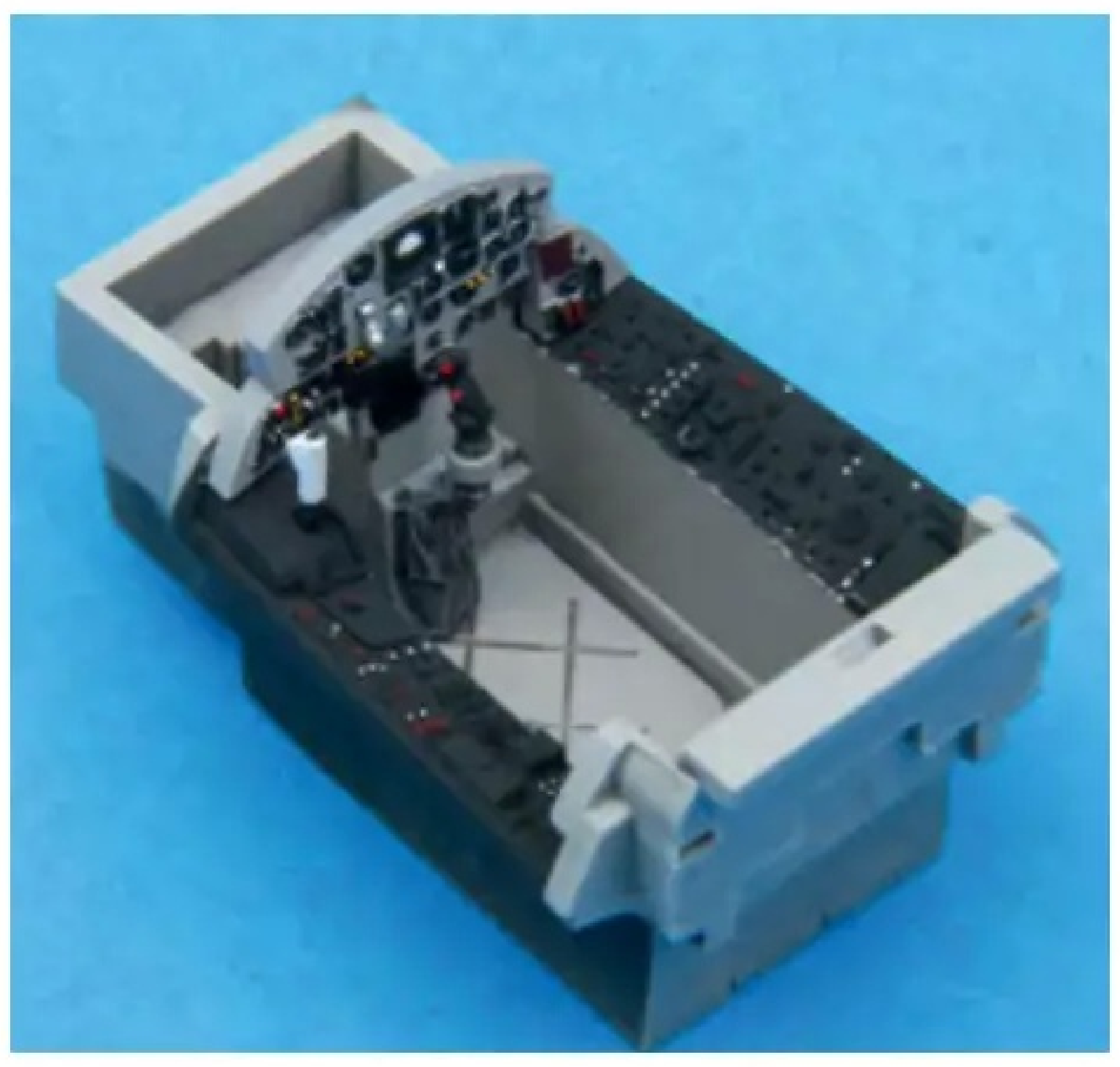
F-104G Historical Fighters Volkel RNLAF Starfighter
By: Kinetic Models
Stock code: K48090
Scale: 1/48
Price: £32.16
Available from: Luckymodel www.luckymodel.com

KINETIC GOLD
HISTORICAL FIGHTERS VOLKEL
F-104G
RNLAF STARFIGHTER
SCALE 1:48

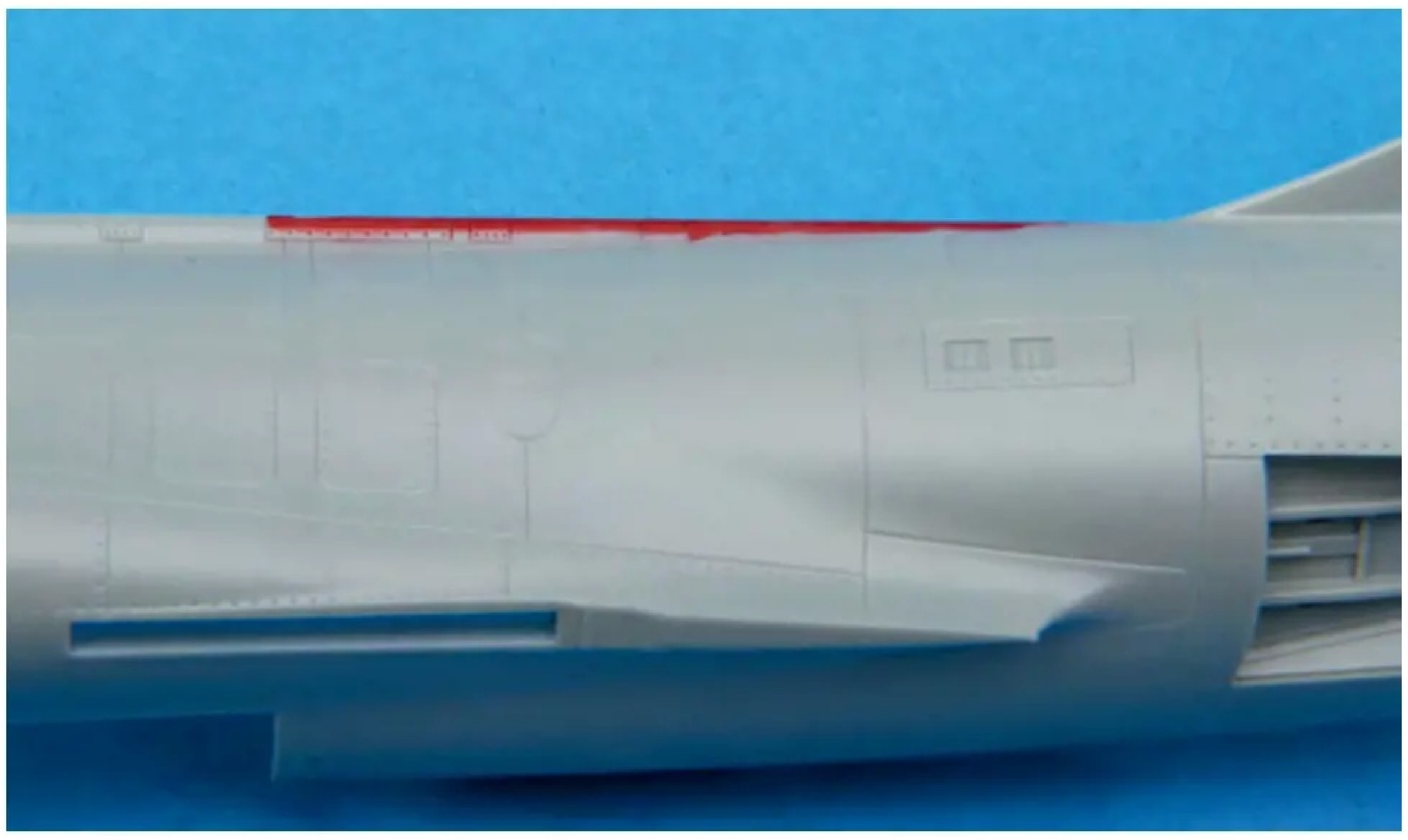
▲ The quality of detail on Hypersonic Models' 3D-printed resin parts is excellent.



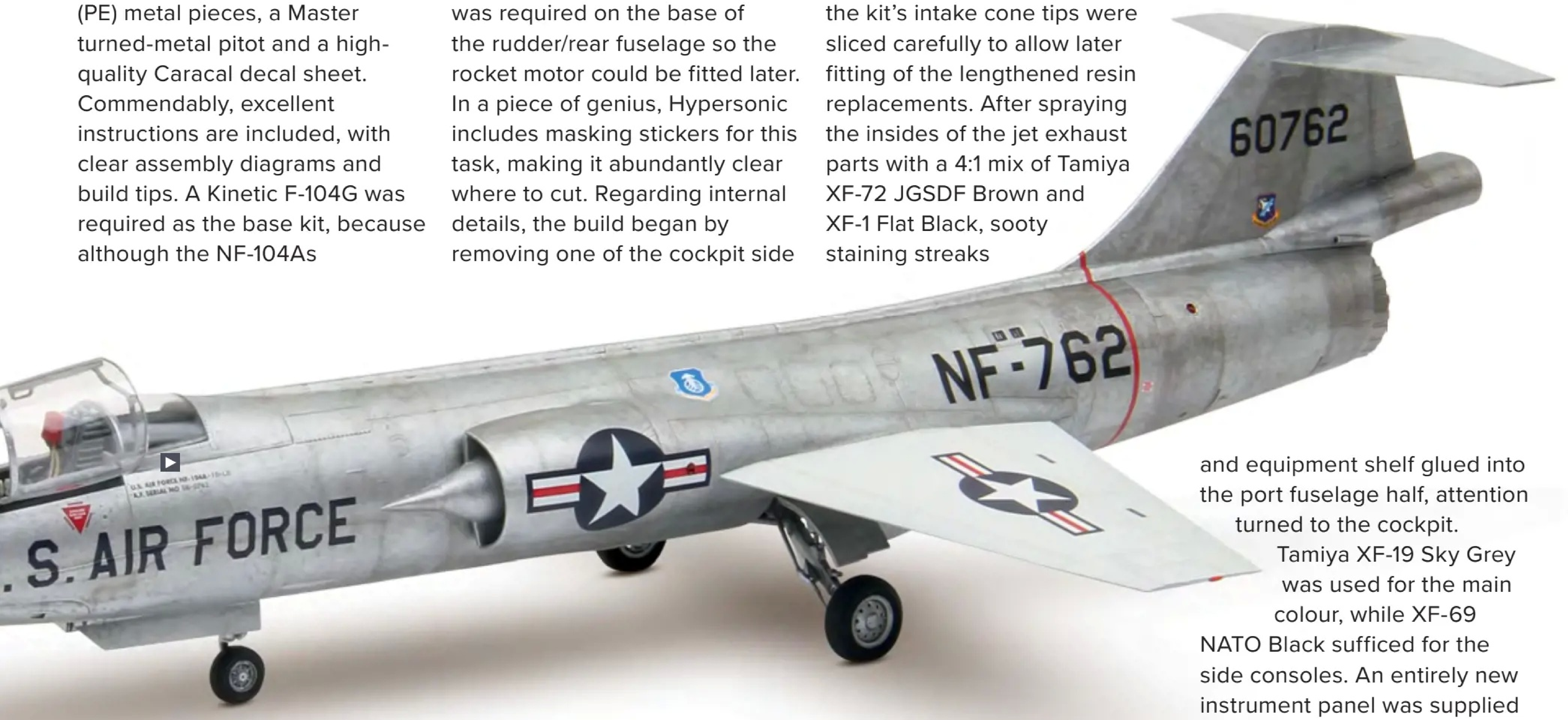
▲ The small blue resin panel on the port-side console is a rocket motor control switch. The underlying styrene features had to be removed before the panel's attachment.



▲ The silver handle on the instrument panel commanded the Reaction Control System… this was one of the NF-104A's unique features when compared to standard Starfighters.



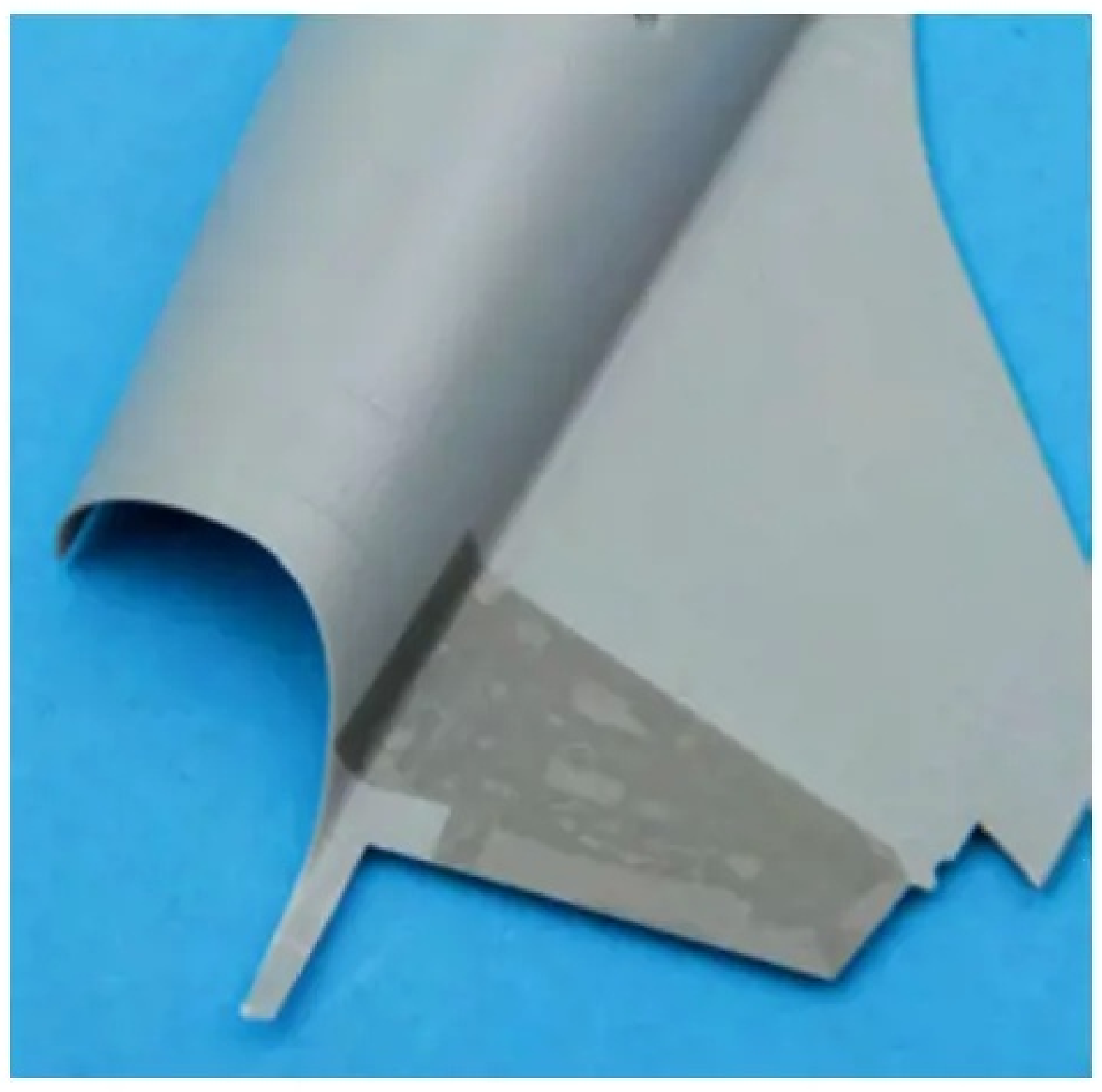
▲ Red marker pen was used to highlight the area of the kit's spine that had to be removed, to accommodate the NF-104A's revised spine structure.

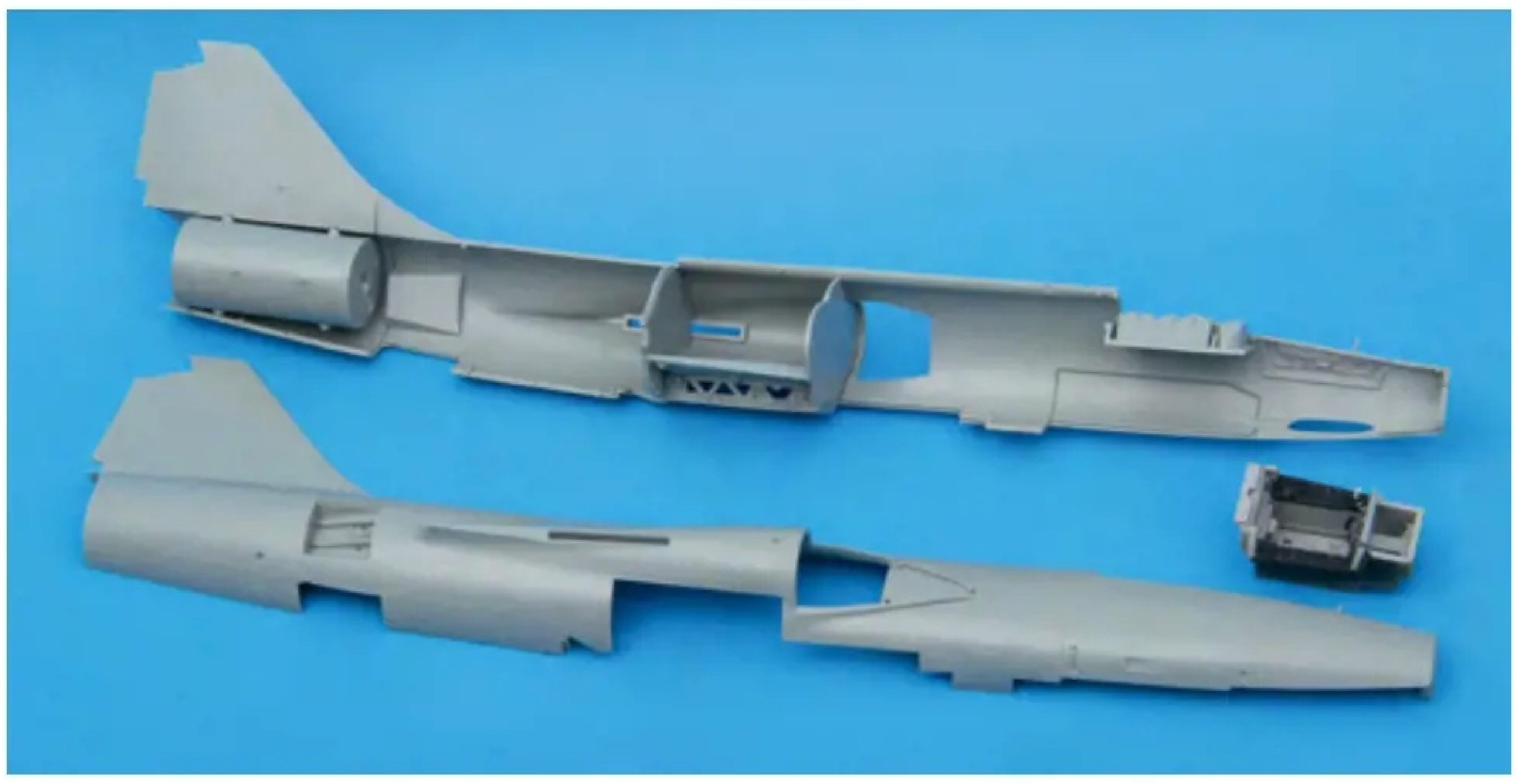

60762
NF-762
U.S. AIR FORCE

(PE) metal pieces, a Master turned-metal pitot and a high-quality Caracal decal sheet. Commendably, excellent instructions are included, with clear assembly diagrams and build tips. A Kinetic F-104G was required as the base kit, because although the NF-104As were modified F-104As, they featured the rear tail section of the F-104G with its enlarged vertical fin. The aerospace trainer airframes featured a whole host of modifications compared to standard F-104As. Besides the aforementioned 'G' tail assembly, the fuselage spine was lengthened and an LR121-NA-1 liquid-fuel rocket engine was fitted. Two-foot wingtip extensions were added to incorporate RCS roll control vents and the engine air intake cones were lengthened to provide better ram-air recovery at high Mach numbers. Beyond this, the standard F-104A nose cone was swapped with a metal replacement, containing RCS vents for pitch and yaw. The cockpit was also modified with a rocket control switch and an RCS control handle. Needless to say, this was going to be a somewhat involved project.

Spinal surgery

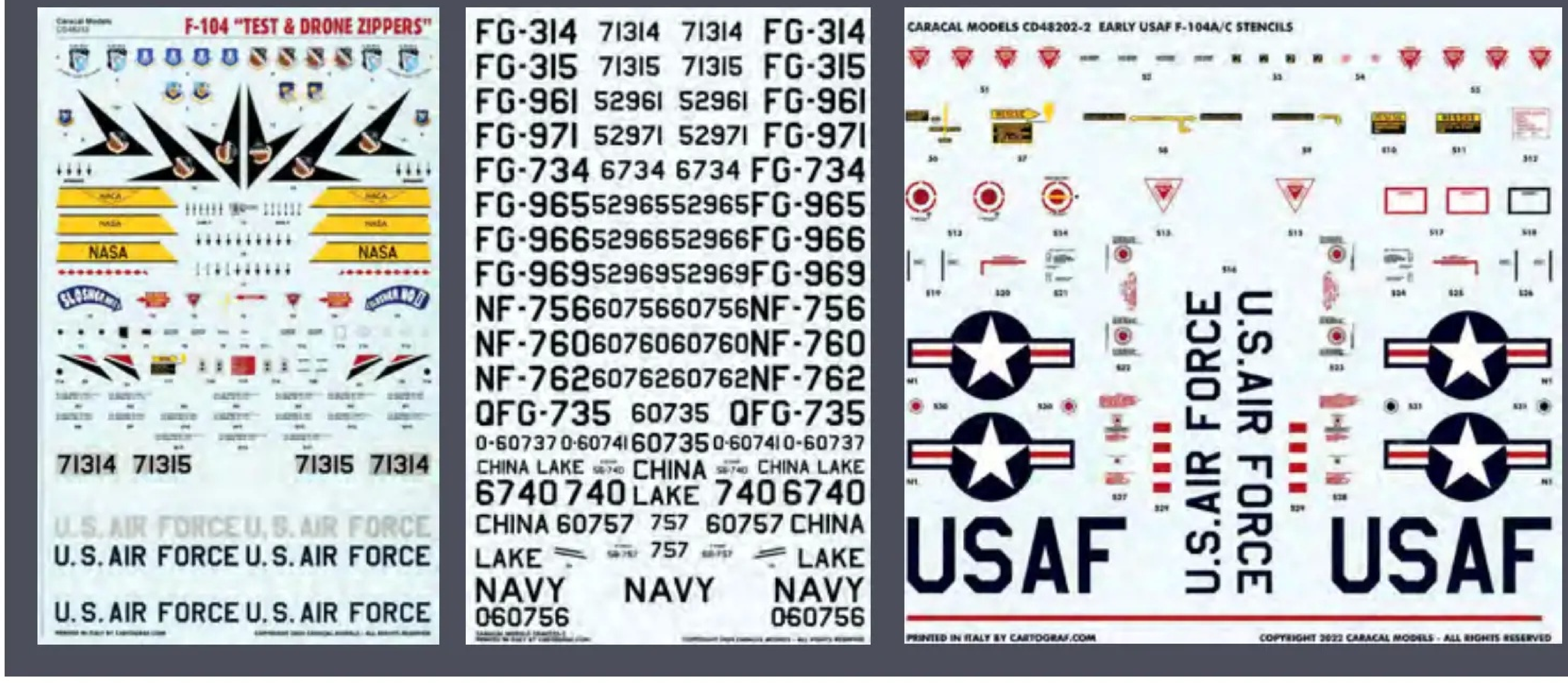
On standard F-104s, the fuselage spine tapers before the leading edge of the vertical stabiliser. However, the NF-104A spine runs all the way to the base of the rocket engine at the fuselage rear. To replicate this, Hypersonic provides a new plastic spine, but fitting it meant removing a major section of the kit spine with a scalpel. More surgery was required on the base of the rudder/rear fuselage so the rocket motor could be fitted later. In a piece of genius, Hypersonic includes masking stickers for this task, making it abundantly clear where to cut. Regarding internal details, the build began by removing one of the cockpit side console panels with a scalpel and file, to make way for a resin rocket motor control panel. Next, the kit's intake cone tips were sliced carefully to allow later fitting of the lengthened resin replacements. After spraying the insides of the jet exhaust parts with a 4:1 mix of Tamiya XF-72 JGSDF Brown and XF-1 Flat Black, sooty staining streaks were created with a thinned mix of Flat Black. With the exhaust pipe, main undercarriage bay and equipment shelf glued into the port fuselage half, attention turned to the cockpit. Tamiya XF-19 Sky Grey was used for the main colour, while XF-69 NATO Black sufficed for the side consoles. An entirely new instrument panel was supplied by Hypersonic, with one of the most notable differences being the control handle for the ▶


▲ Convenient masks were included to show exactly where to cut the kit's plastic to fit the rocket motor.


▲ Once all the internal sub-assemblies were completed, it was time to seal the fuselage halves.

SPOILT FOR CHOICE

A large Caracal Models decal sheet is supplied with Hypersonic's conversion set, but just the following options are relevant to the NF-104A: 56-0756, 56-0760, 56-0762.


F-104 "TEST & DRONE ZIPPERS"
NASA
71314 71315
U.S. AIR FORCE U.S. AIR FORCE
FG-314 71314 71314 FG-314
FG-315 71315 71315 FG-315
FG-961 52961 52961 FG-961
FG-971 52971 52971 FG-971
FG-734 6734 6734 FG-734
FG-965 52965 52965 FG-965
FG-966 52966 52966 FG-966
FG-969 52969 52969 FG-969
NF-756 60756 60756 NF-756
NF-760 60760 60760 NF-760
NF-762 60762 60762 NF-762
QFG-735 60735 QFG-735
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060756
CARACAL MODELS CD48202-2 EARLY USAF F-104A/C STENCILS
U.S. AIR FORCE
USAF

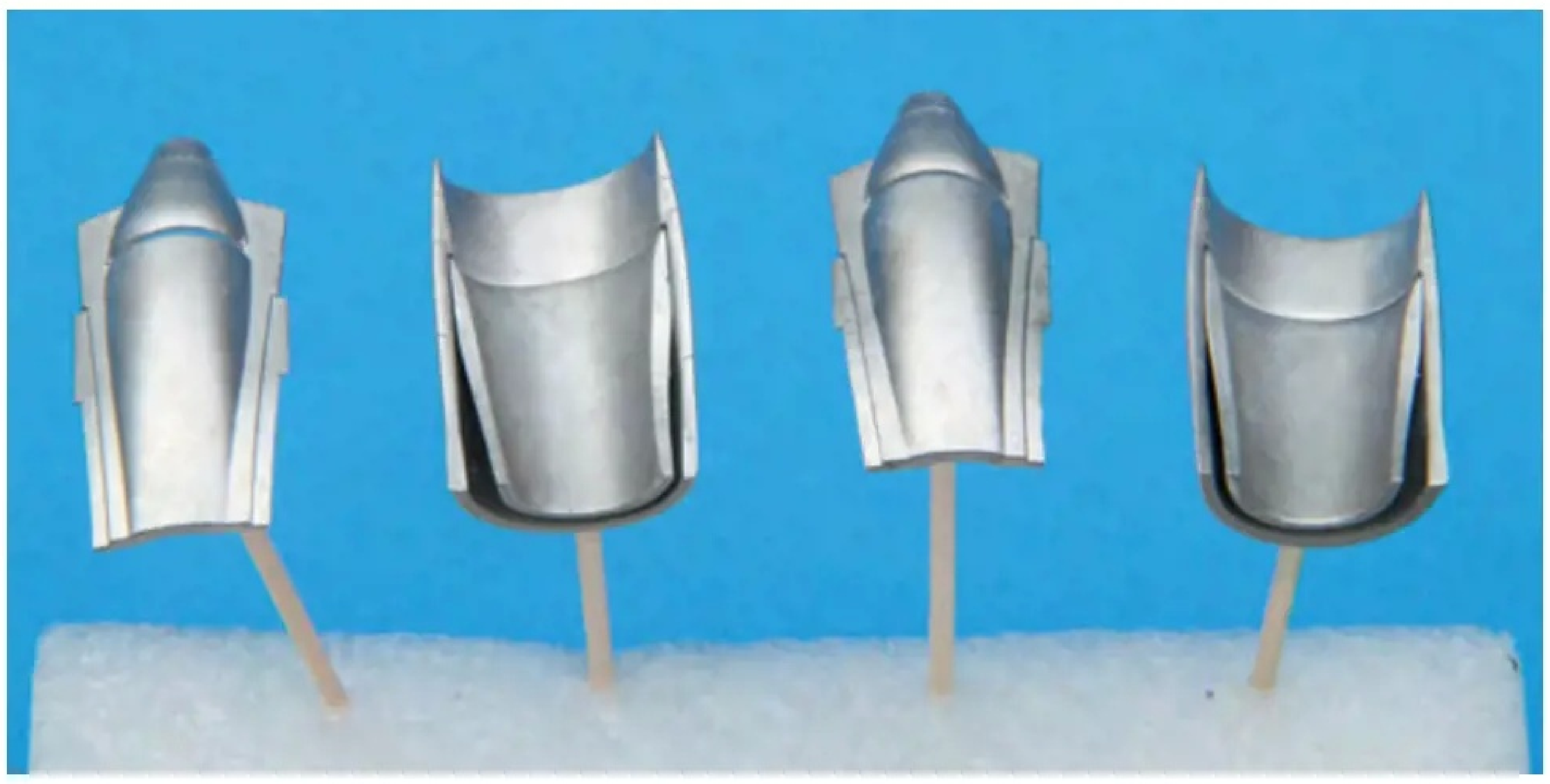
60762
NF-762
USAF
U.S. AIR

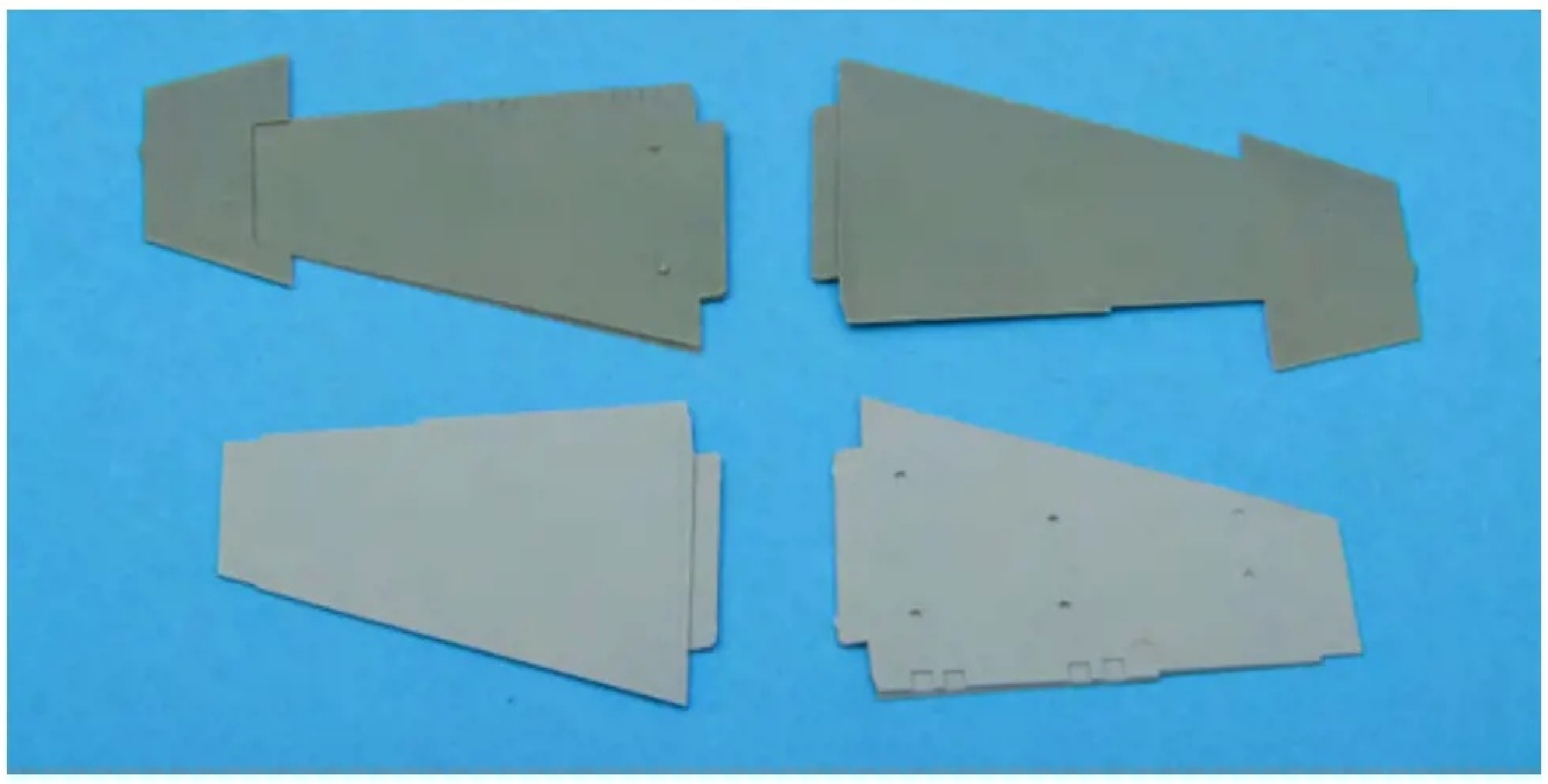
> **“Hypersonic’s conversion is an impressive package, containing a plethora of multi-media parts”**

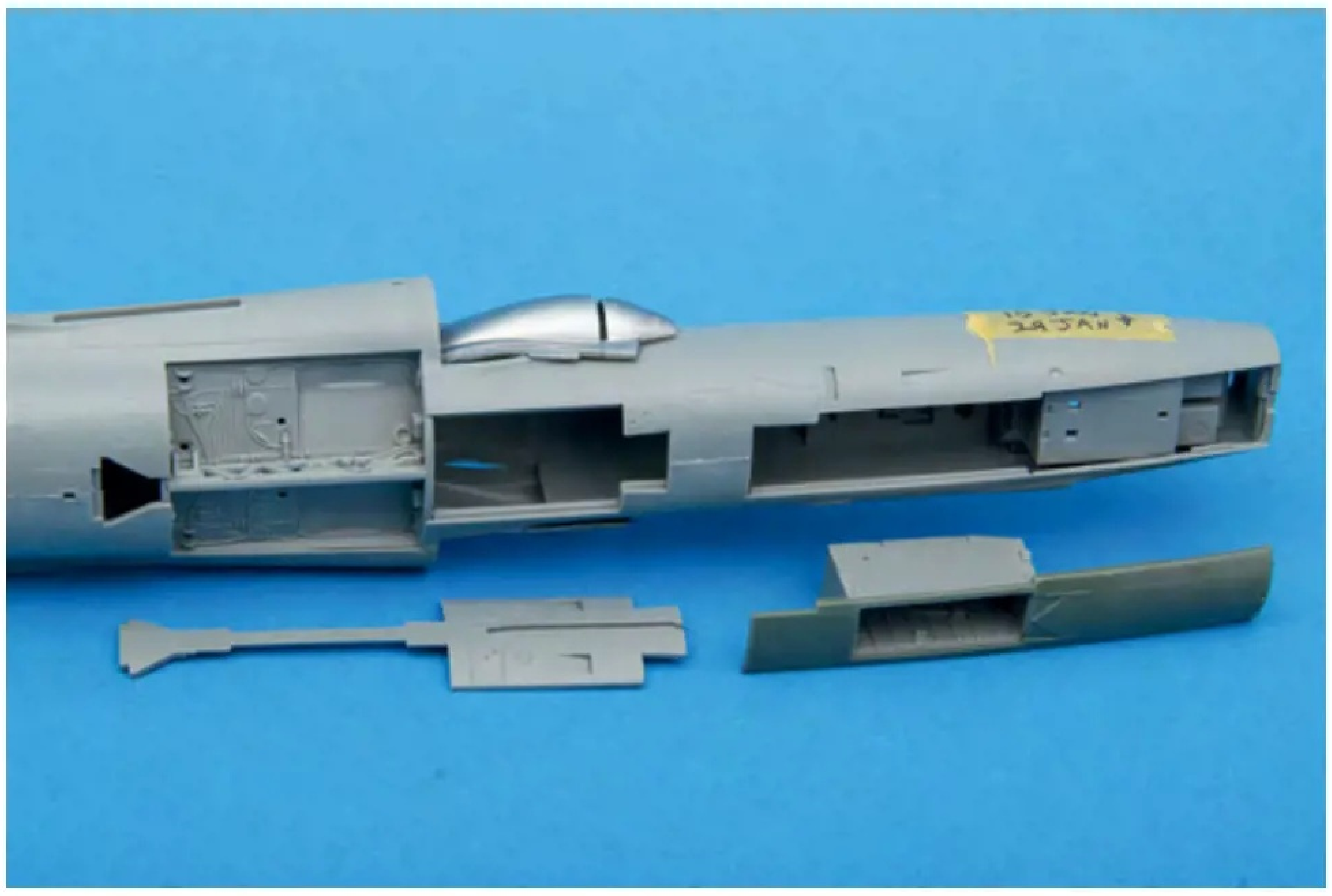
RCS. Unfortunately, I broke mine removing it from its supports, so plastic rod was bent into shape as a replacement. Although no decals were included for the new instrument panel, it was possible to represent dial needles with an ultra-thin brush and water-thinned Vallejo 70.951 White. Once cockpit weathering and varnishing was complete, it was possible to fix it to the port fuselage half, before both halves were joined with Revell Contacta Cement. A replacement insert was provided for the forward lower fuselage, but this was made from injection-moulded plastic, as opposed to 3D-printed resin. The kit nosewheel bay had to be secured to the insert, before the whole assembly was joined to the fuselage with Tamiya Extra Thin Cement. More replacement parts for the wings were in order, too. To incorporate the RCS into the NF-104A design, wingtip extensions were fitted, and these were supplied as single-piece plastic parts, which replaced the kit’s upper wing halves entirely. The arrester hook recess was also faired over on the NF-104A, and to cater for this, another resin insert was supplied and attached with cyanoacrylate (CA) glue, plus another slender resin insert that also attached to the underside.

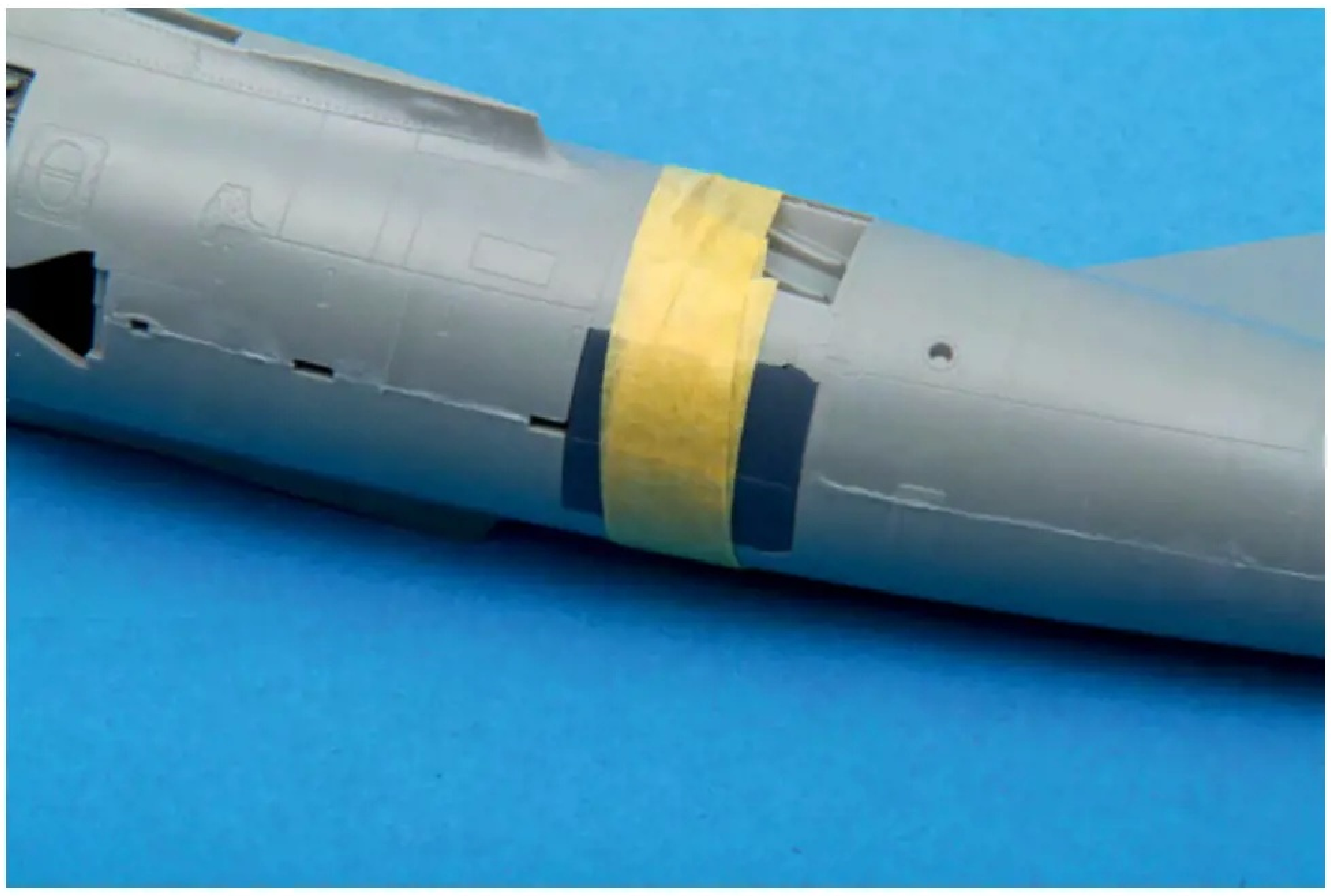
Rhinoplasty

The NF-104A featured a metal replacement nose, which incorporated RCS vents for pitch and yaw. A resin unit was provided, but this posed a construction conundrum because the mating surfaces were minimal; the added


▲ Before painting, it was necessary to remove the intake cone tips, to allow the longer NF-104A versions to be fitted later.


▲ An entirely new set of upper wing halves was included to account for the NF-104A’s extended wingtips and RCS system.

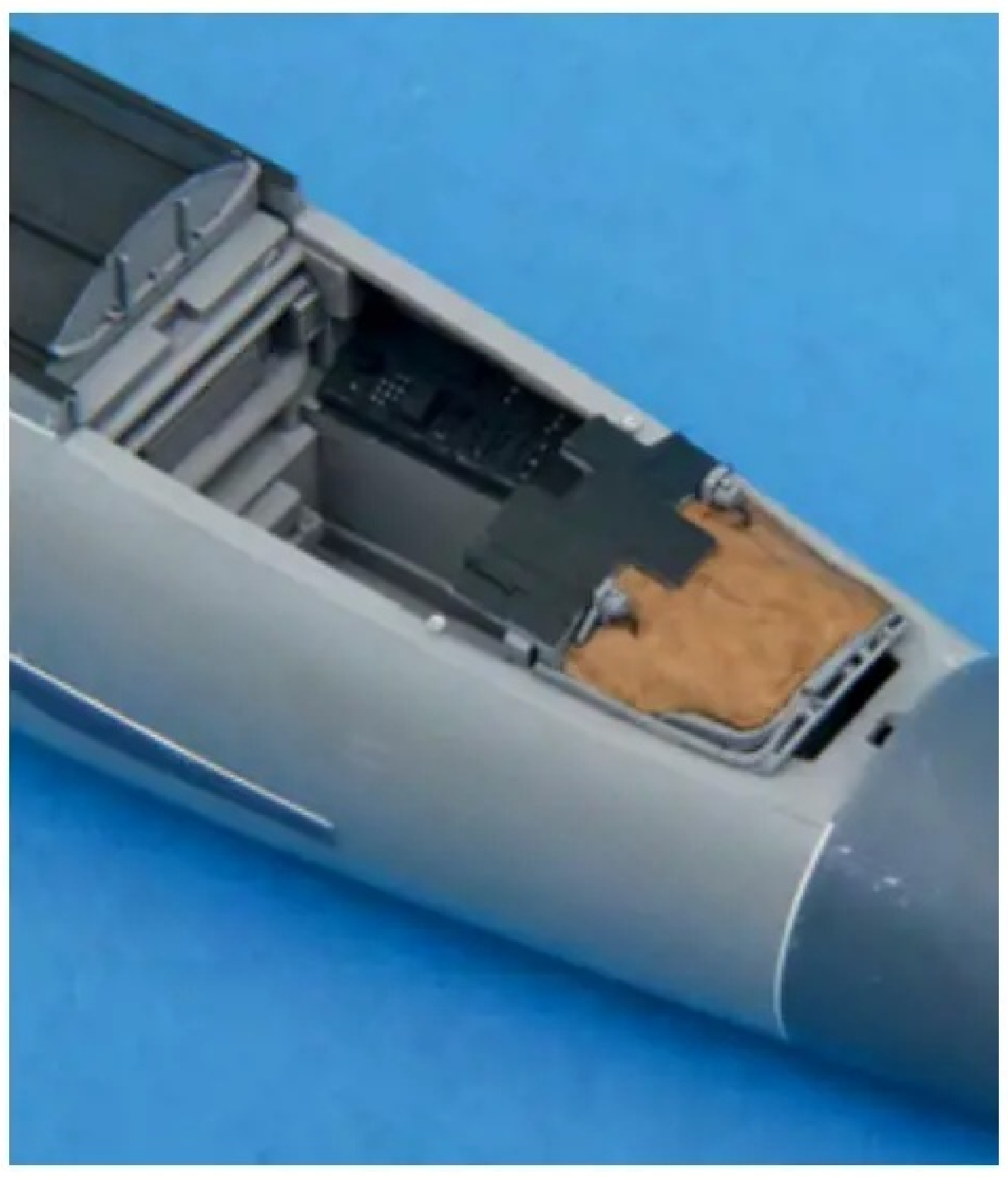

▲ The kit’s nose undercarriage bay had to be attached to Hypersonic’s new under-fuselage insert.


▲ The arrester hook recess was faired over on the NF-104A and Hypersonic supplies a 3D-printed resin insert for this area.

FORCE
RESCUE

complication was that nose weight was required and would place further strain on the join. A solution was reached by filling the hollow resin nose with Deluxe Materials Liquid Gravity and securing it with a circular plastic-card bulkhead, attached with Gorilla Epoxy. Next, the centre was drilled to allow the insertion of a plastic locating rod to strengthen the join. A hole was then drilled in the kit's forward fuselage plastic bulkhead so a plastic rod could be inserted and secured with more epoxy, before it was surrounded with square plastic-rod bracing.

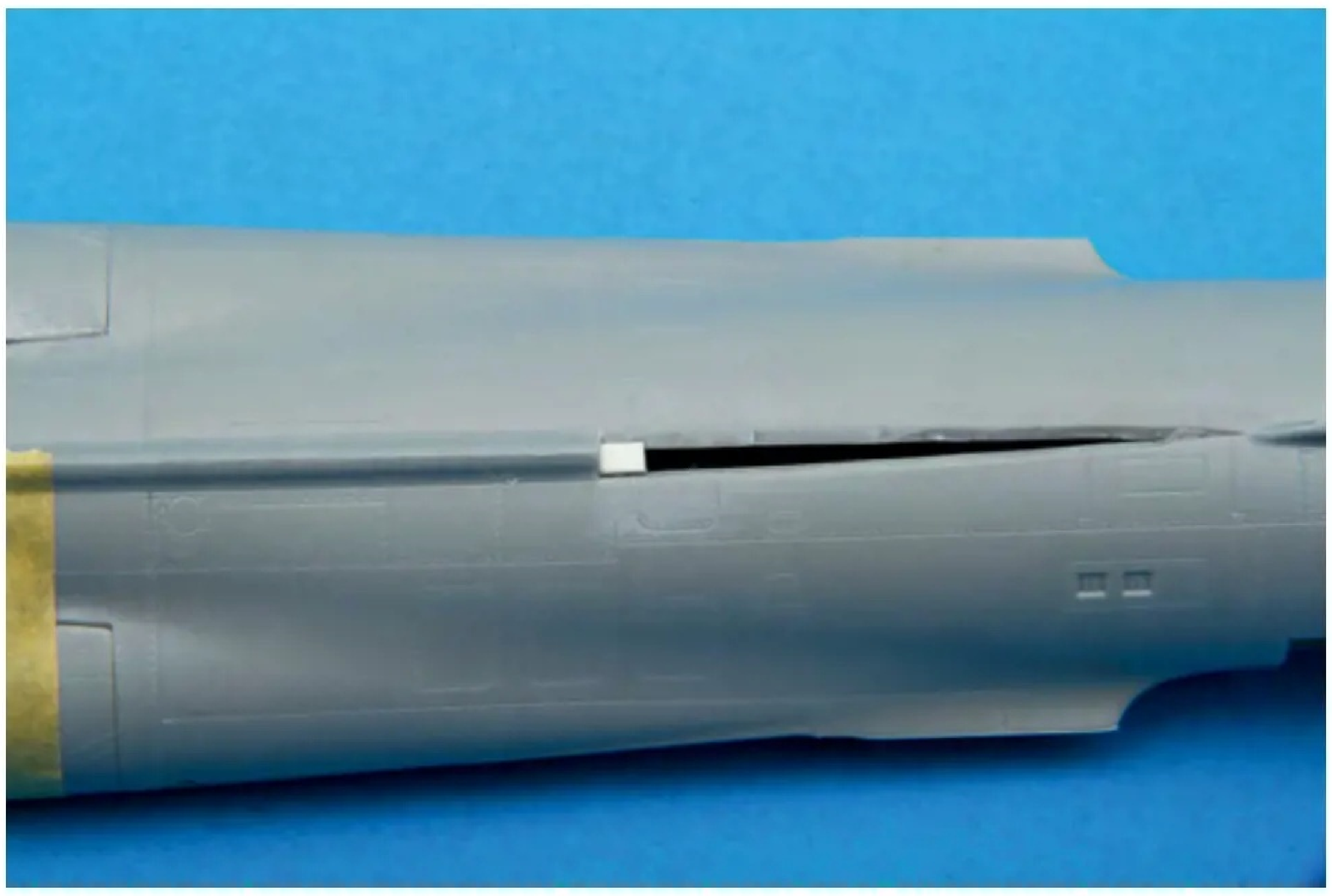
Once everything had dried, CA was applied to the locating rod and hole, while epoxy was run around the outer mating surfaces of the nose cone. The principle was that the CA would dry reasonably quickly, allowing the nose to be held in place, while the slower-drying epoxy (which would inevitably ooze from the minimalist outer mating surfaces and make a mess) could be neatened with damp cotton buds before it set. Happily, the whole approach worked a treat and before long the resin nose was attached securely to the plastic fuselage.



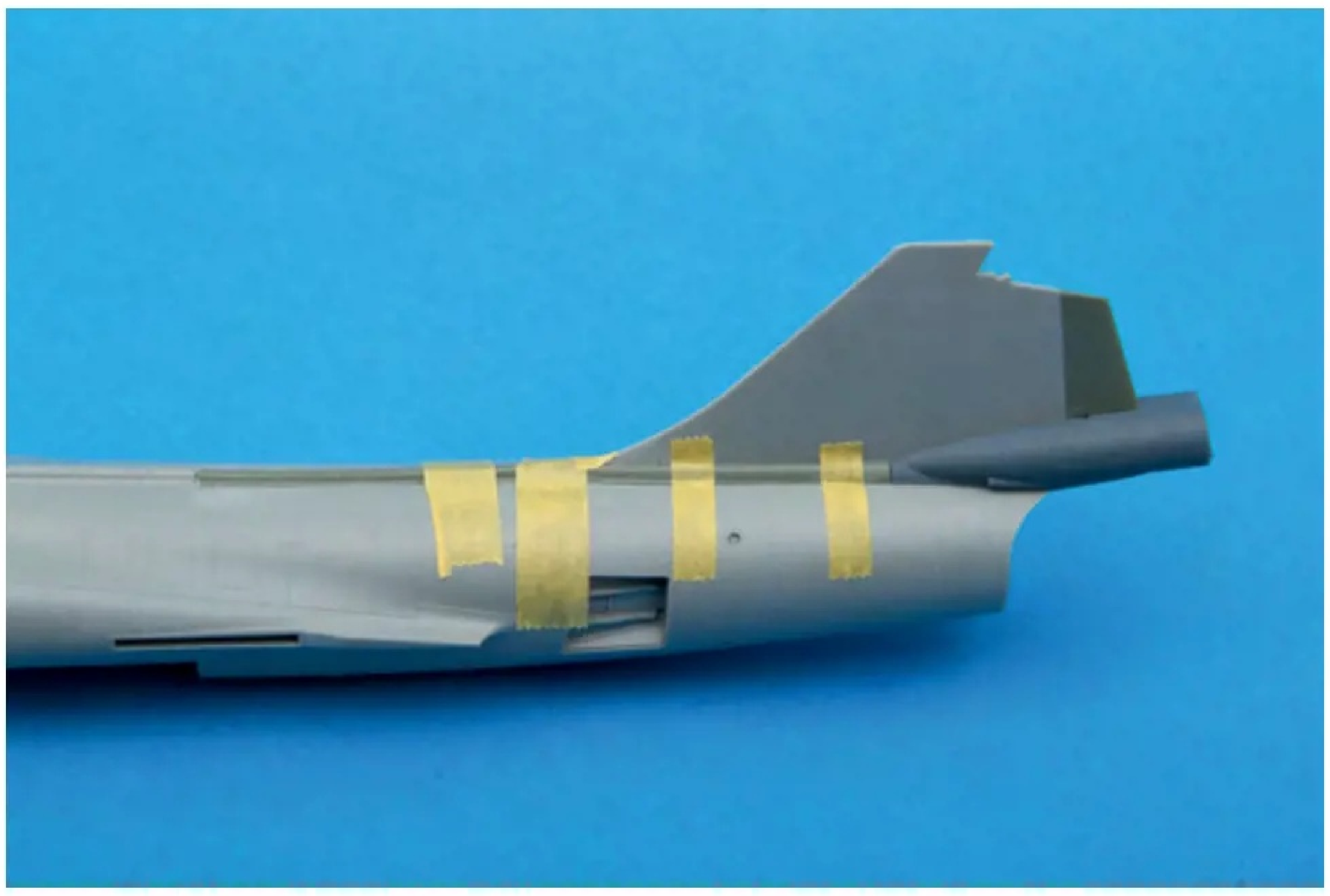
▲ A real standout was the instrument panel coaming supplied by Hypersonic – just look at the wiring and pipe detailing!

Seams about right

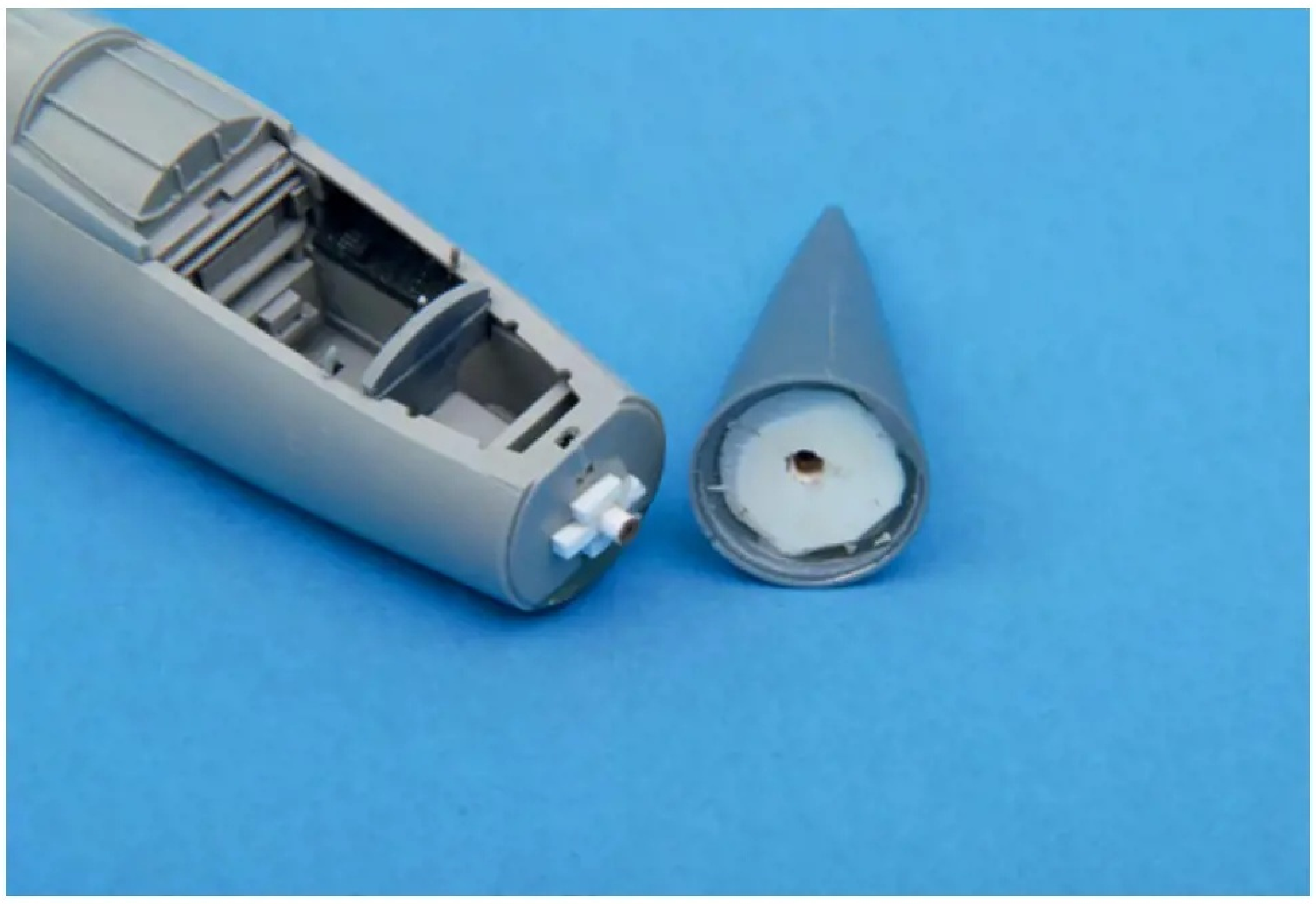
After leaving the fuselage halves for around two weeks so the Revell Contacta could harden, the seams were sanded, taking care to pre-scribe (deepen with a metal scriber) the awkward, tiny access panels on the spine so they wouldn't be lost during sanding. Their small size and the curve of the spine would have made them far too awkward to re-scribe if they were lost during sanding. The new rear spine part needed encouragement from Tamiya tape to stay in place, before Extra Thin Cement secured it. A new shortened plastic rudder was also supplied, and after it had been glued and left to dry, the resin rocket motor was attached with epoxy. Fitting the new resin intake cones and forward fuselage strengthening plates needed yet more epoxy, and as ever, the excess was removed with damp cotton buds for neatness. Once the wings were attached, the complete airframe was a sight to behold. One of my favourite parts of the whole Hypersonic conversion was the resin instrument panel coaming. The detail was gorgeous and the fabric covering really came to life with careful brush painting and an oil



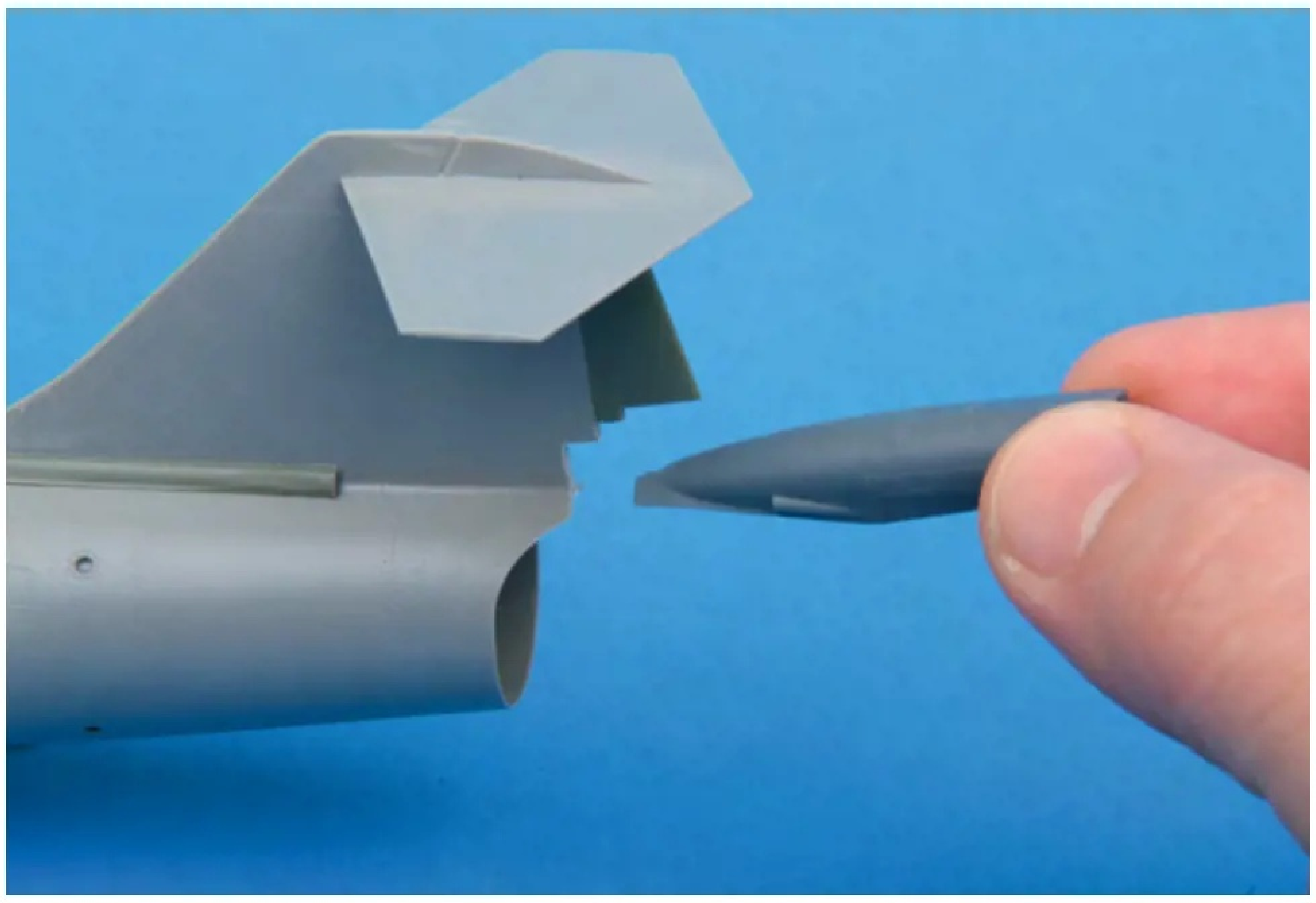
▲ A plastic rod was attached to the gap left by removing the kit spine to prevent the replacement piece falling into the void.



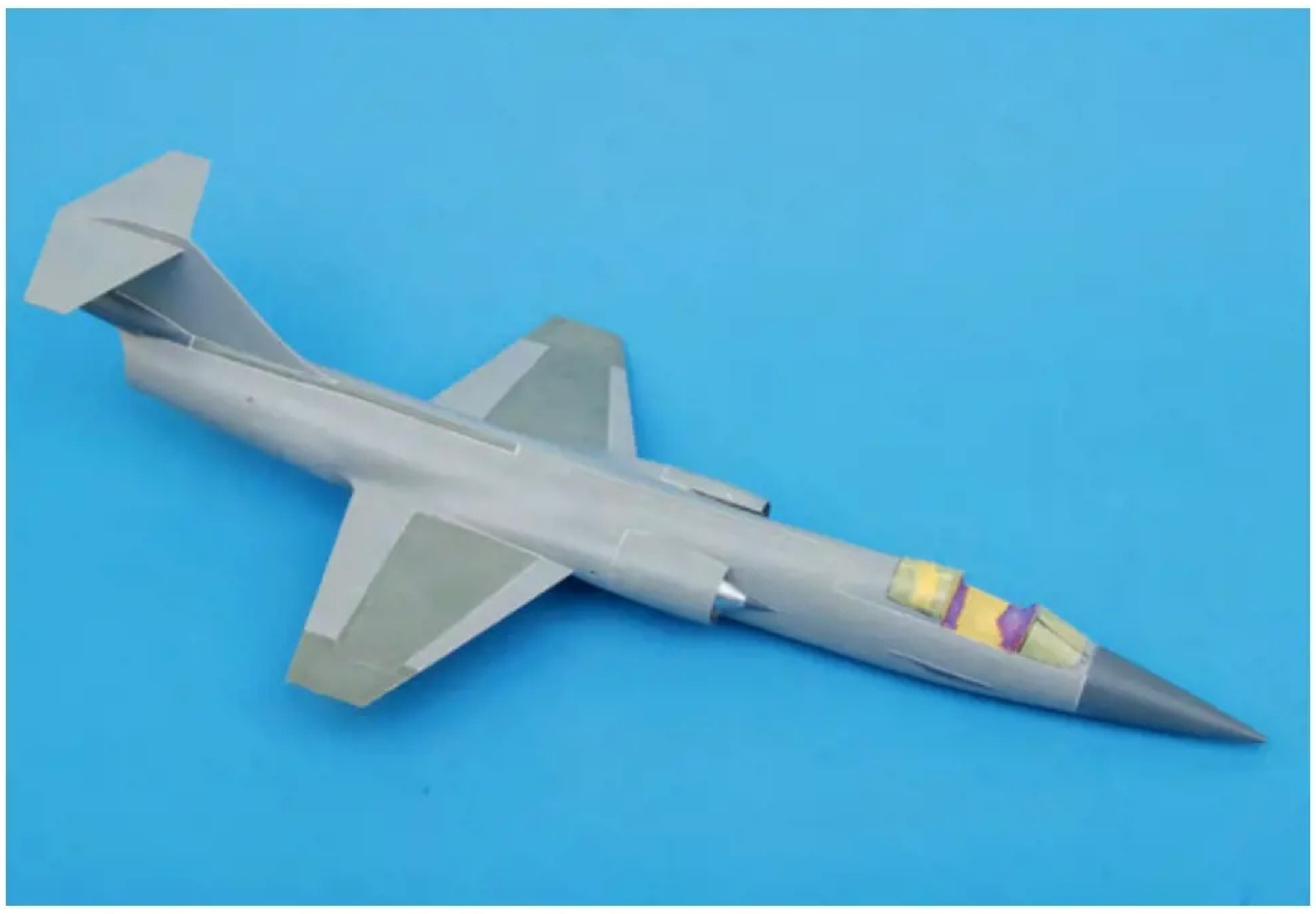
▲ Tape was used to help conform the replacement spine to the curve of the fuselage.



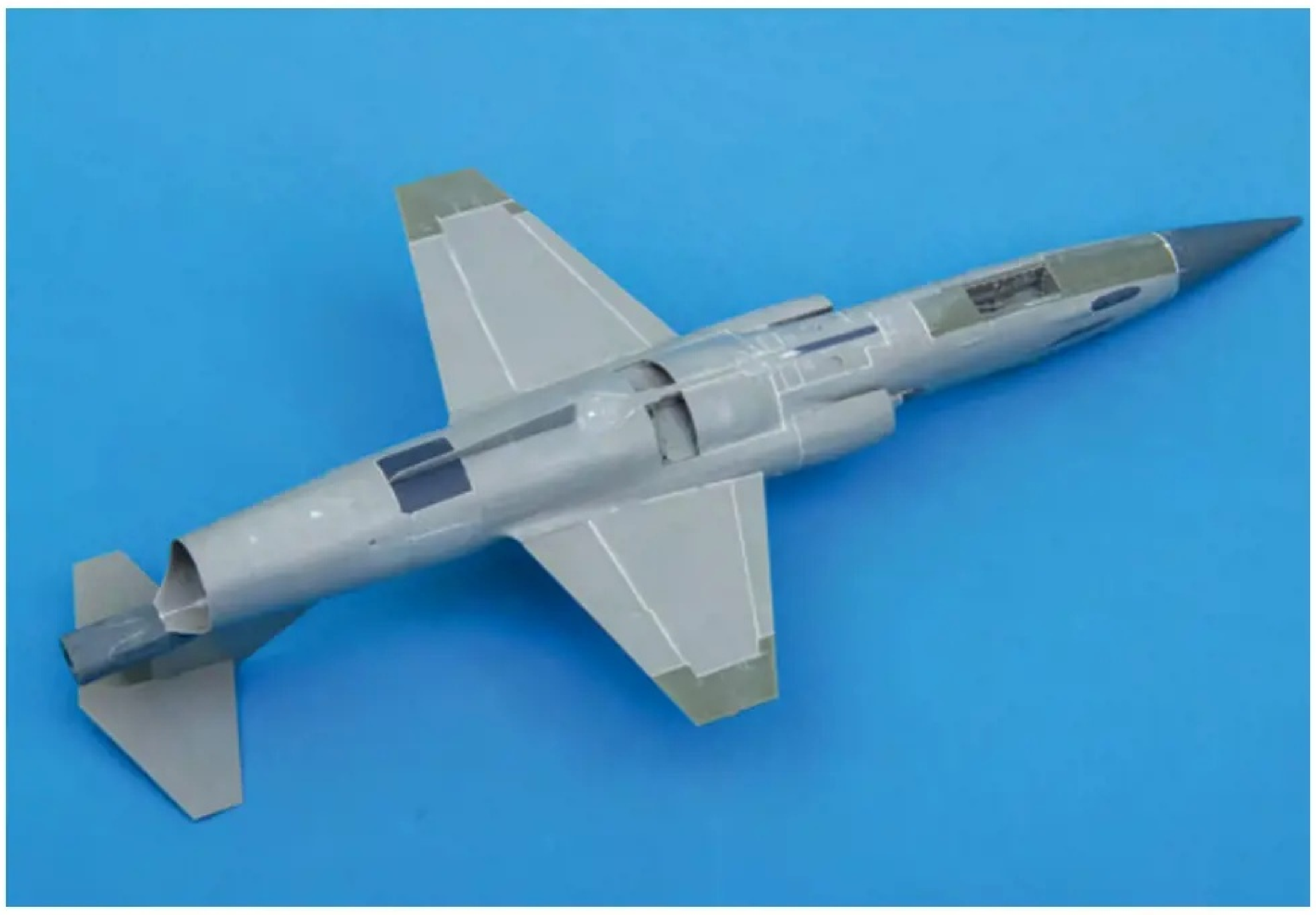
▲ After securing the nose weight into the radome, plastic rod gave greater strength to the join.



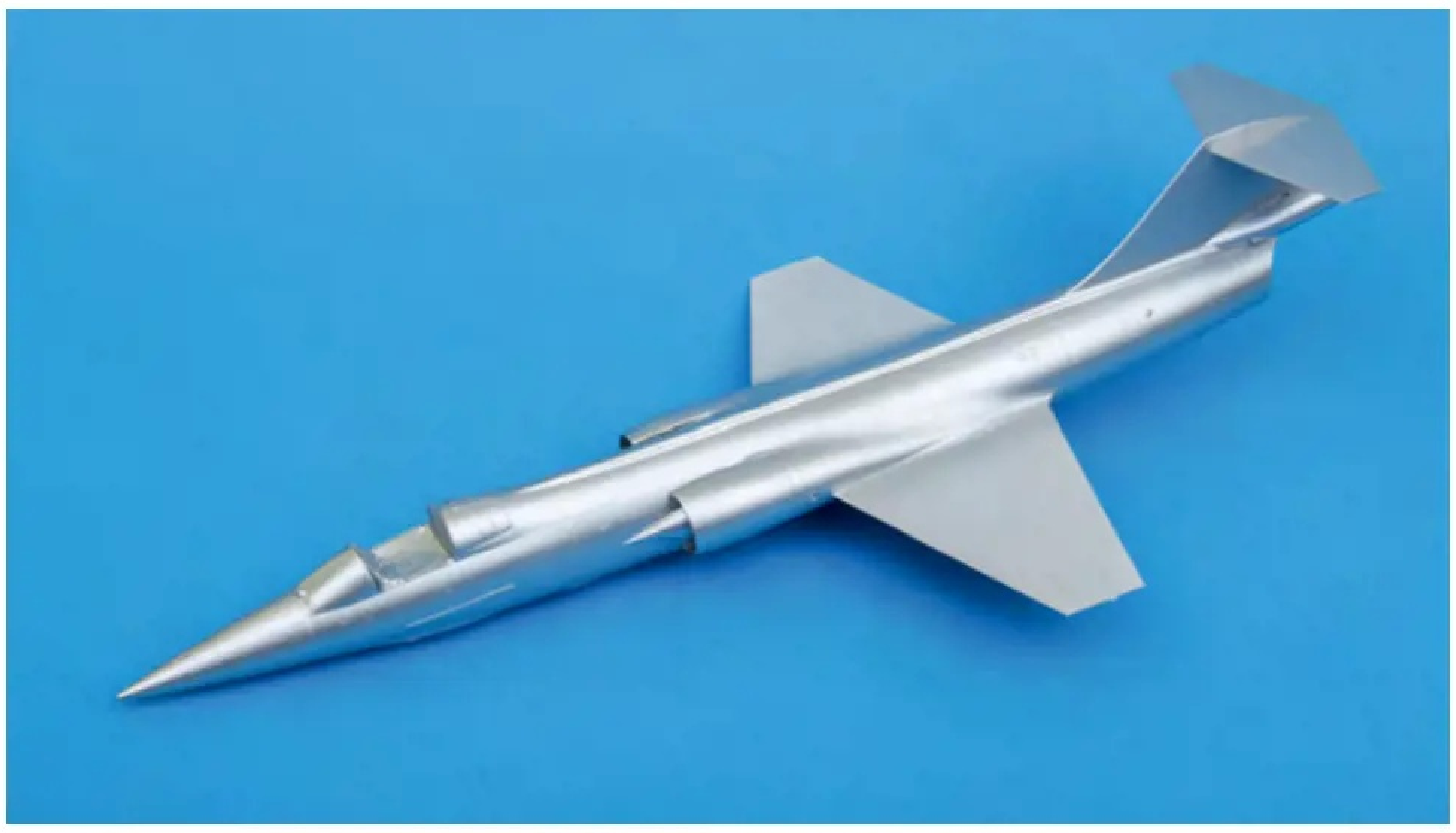
▲ The fit of the rocket motor was excellent and epoxy glue secured it firmly onto the rear fuselage.



▲ All the new parts – 3D-printed resin (blue) and injection-moulded plastic (darker grey) can be seen here to good effect. .



▲ Milliput was employed to neaten various joins on the model; once completed, the cockpit area was masked in readiness for painting.



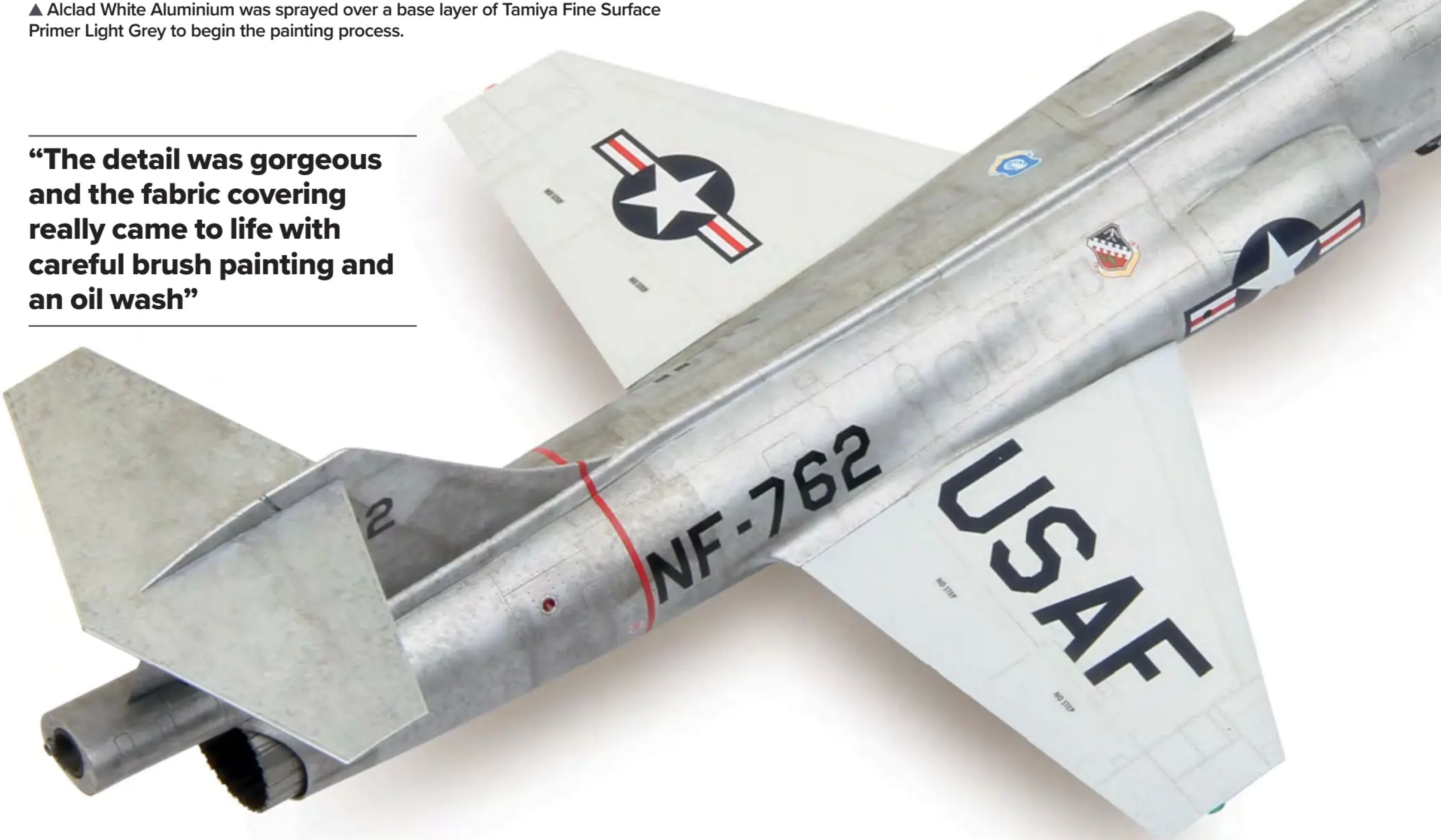
▲ Alclad White Aluminium was sprayed over a base layer of Tamiya Fine Surface Primer Light Grey to begin the painting process.

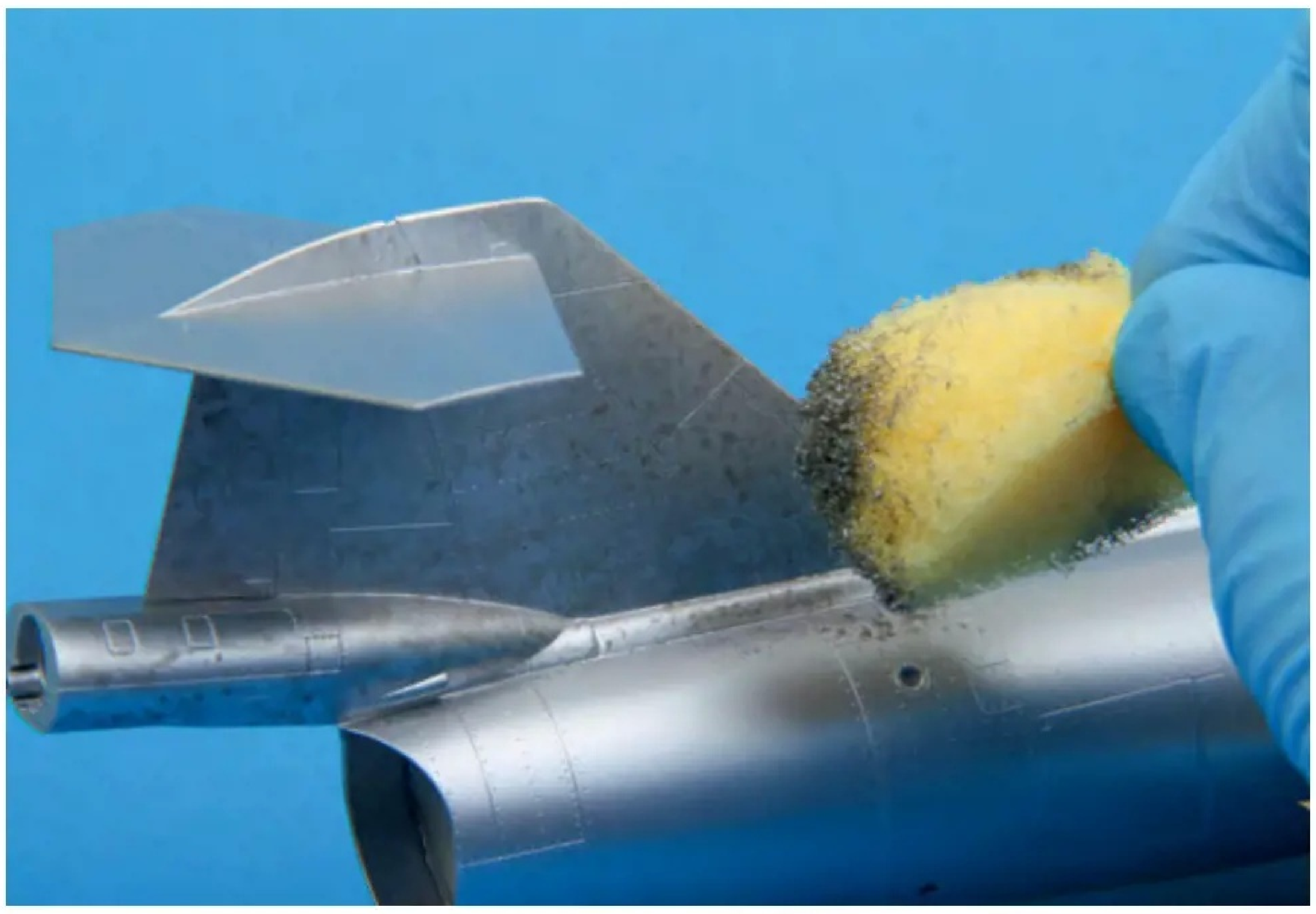
wash. Plenty of Milliput Superfine White epoxy filler was required in multiple places over the airframe, mainly to neaten joins that fell along natural panel lines, but where a gap remained. After applying it with cocktail sticks, the excess was rubbed away with yet more damp cotton buds. Any seams that had been sanded were checked by spraying a coat of XF-54 Dark Sea Grey, as it's surprisingly difficult to spot flaws on bare plastic. After remedial filling and sanding, it was almost time for colour.

Shiny skin

The bare-metal finish of the NF-104A would be replicated with Alclad, but because it's so thin, it magnifies any underlying surface imperfections. To counter this, a universally smooth base coat was required, and was achieved with Tamiya

"The detail was gorgeous and the fabric covering really came to life with careful brush painting and an oil wash"





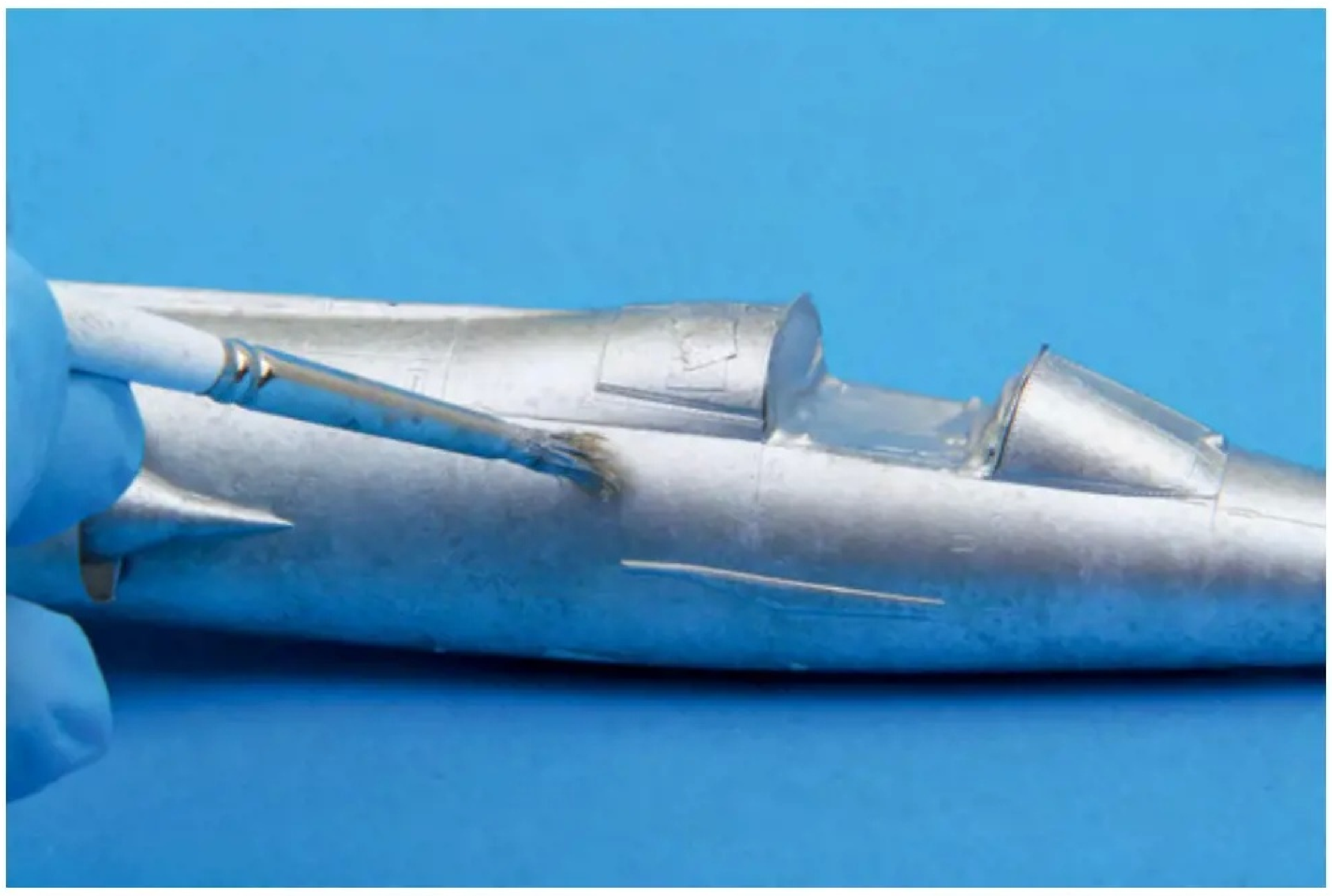
▲ Enhancement of the natural-metal effects began by applying water-thinned Citadel Iron Hands Steel with a sponge.

U.S. AIR FORCE

Fine Surface Primer Light Gray straight from the aerosol. Do take care when purchasing this product though, as Tamiya also produces a similar surface primer that isn't fine… and definitely isn't smooth enough for Alclad to go straight over the top. Alclad ALC106 White Aluminium was sprayed over the fuselage and tail before the fun really started. After dipping a sponge into Citadel Iron Hands Steel (thinned a little with water), the excess was removed by dabbing the sponge on paper, before the paint was sponged onto the model. The aim was to create a pattern of random blotches, and the paint can be worked as it dries if you're not happy with the pattern. After covering the whole fuselage, the effect looked stark, but the next stage muted it suitably. A brush was dipped into neat Tamiya XF-16 Flat Aluminium and the excess was wiped on paper until the brush was nearly dry, before it was scrubbed in random motions over the fuselage and tail. Real F-104s often had several skin panels that appeared much darker than the surrounding areas, so Citadel Lead Belcher was thinned with water, then carefully brushed onto the desired panels. The paint was quite thin, so it took several applications to build the desired tonal contrast, but the final effect was worth it. Alclad ALC-600 Aqua Gloss was used to protect the metal work, before major masking commenced. The nose anti-glare panel received NATO Black and XF-2 Flat White was used for the wing upper surfaces, while a home-made Air Defense Command (ADC) Gray was mixed and sprayed for the wing lower surfaces. This comprised a 1:1 blend of XF-80 Royal Light Grey and Flat White. More masking ensued for the dielectric areas on the lower airframe – a panel on the lower forward fuselage and on the ventral fin, represented by XF-60 Dark Yellow. After glossing the entire model, a series of home-made oil washes accentuated the panel lines, before the Caracal decals were employed. They were excellent and after application were sealed with more gloss.

Clean machine

All photos of NF-104As showed highly polished and clean airframes, so the intention was to keep weathering to a minimum. That said, the oil washes hadn't taken well to the panel lines, which left the model looking too plain, and although I wanted a shiny airframe, I'm not a fan of how Aqua Gloss looks as a final finish. It was therefore decided to apply just two or three light mists of highly diluted matt varnish (Winsor & Newton Galeria Matt Varnish, thinned 70:30 with a half-and-half mix of isopropyl alcohol and de-ionised water) ▶



▲ The next stage of the natural metal process was to randomly scrub sparing amounts of Tamiya XF-16 Flat Aluminium onto the model with an old brush.

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

Blu Tack
Cyanoacrylate glue
De-ionised water
Isopropyl alcohol
Wet and Dry abrasive paper
White spirit

Alclad (www.alclad2.com)
ALC-106 White Aluminium
ALC-600 Aqua Gloss

Citadel (www.citadelcolour.com)
Iron Hands Steel
Leadbelcher

Gorilla Glue (www.gorillaglue.com)
Gorilla Epoxy

Microscale (www.microscale.com)
Micro Kristal Klear
Micro Sol

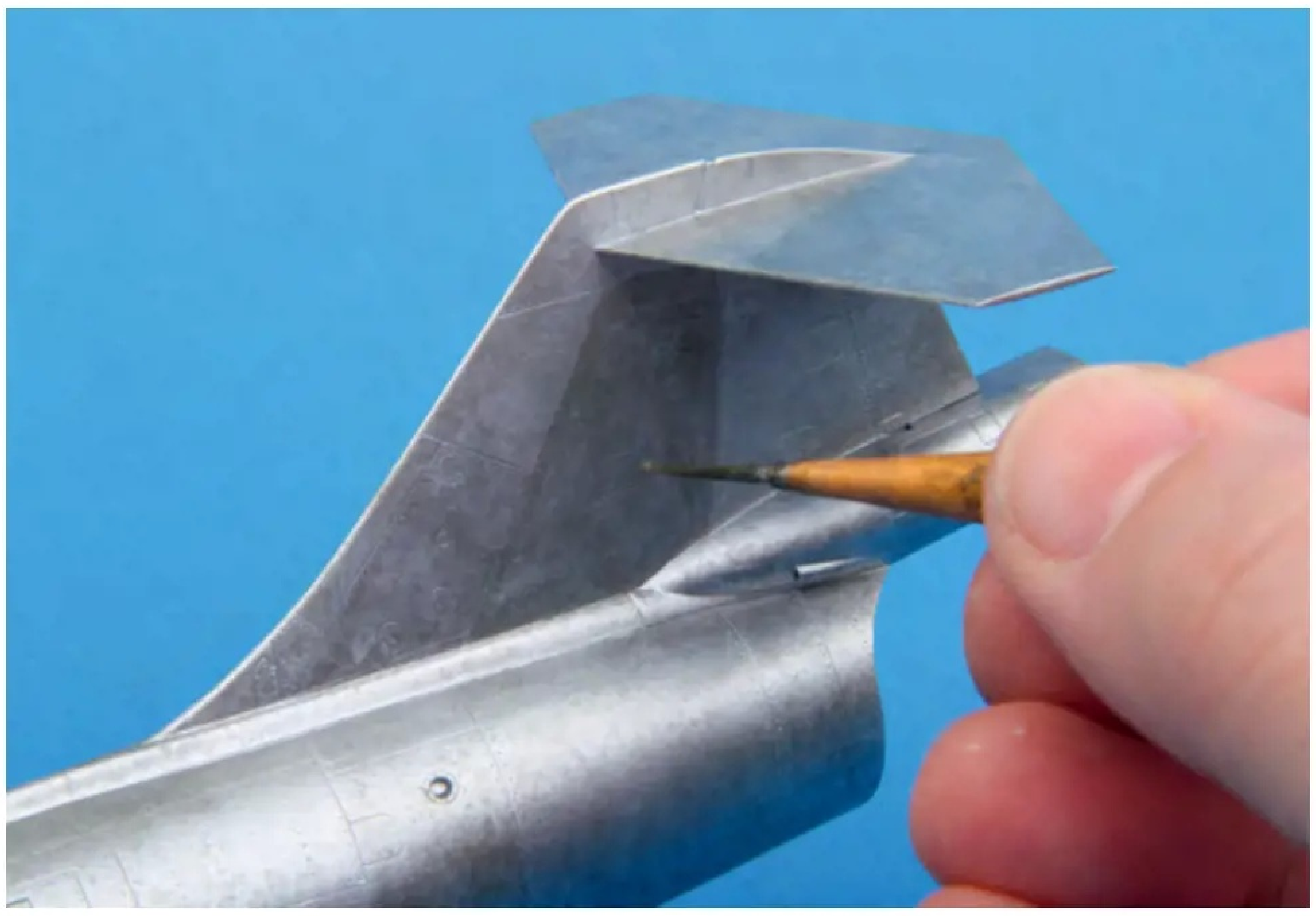
Milliput (www.milliput.com)
Milliput Superfine White

Revell (www.revell.de)
Revell Contacta Cement

Tamiya (www.hobbyco.net)
Extra Thin Cement
Fine Surface Primer Light Gray
XF-54 Dark Sea Grey
XF-60 Dark Yellow
X-21 Flat Base
XF-1 Flat Black
XF-2 Flat White
XF-72 JGSDF Brown
XF-69 NATO Black
XF-67 NATO Green
XF-64 Red Brown
XF-80 Royal Light Grey
XF-19 Sky Grey

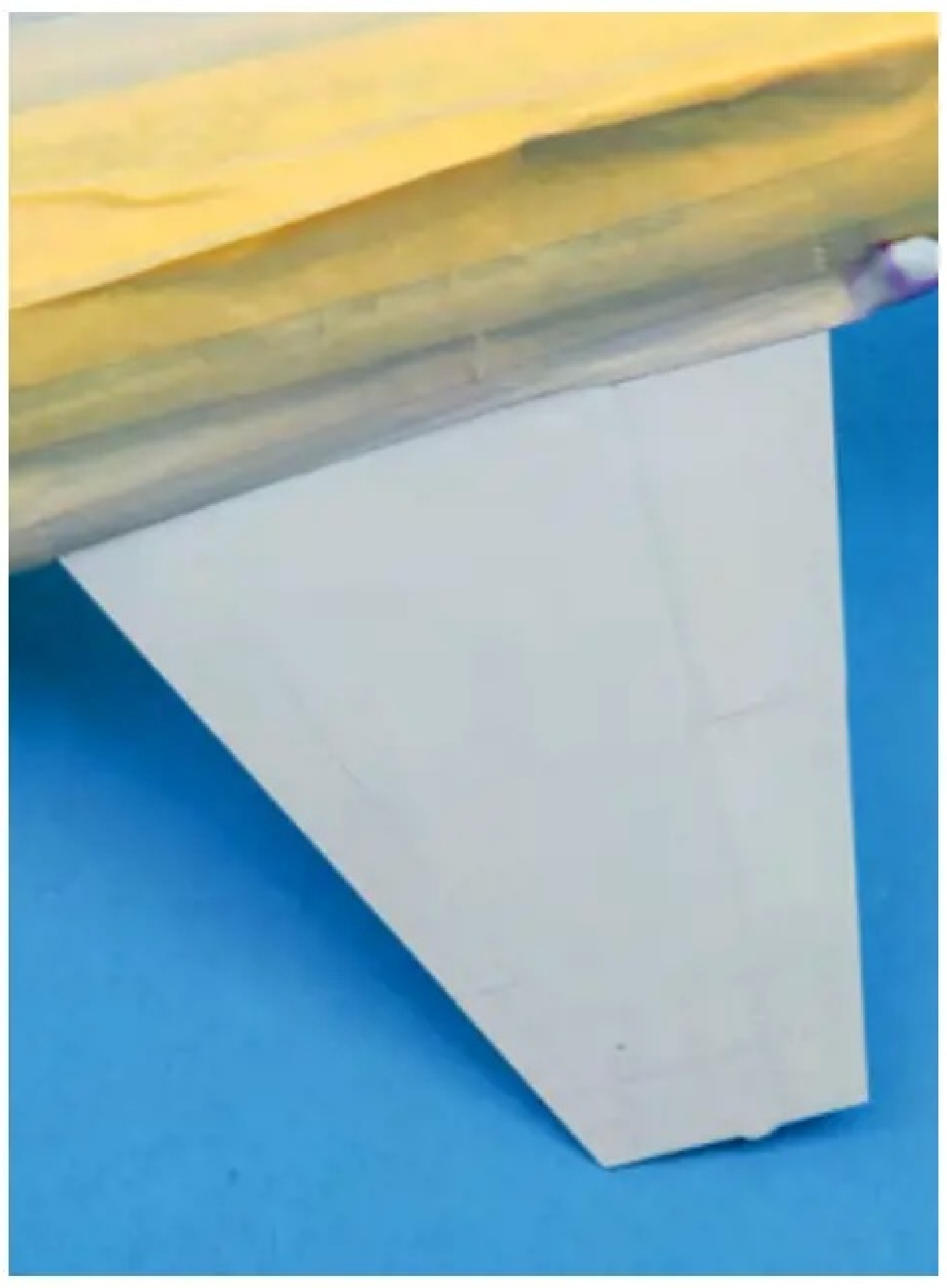
Winsor & Newton (www.winsornewton.com)
Assorted oil paints
Galeria Matt Varnish

Vallejo (www.creativemodels.co.uk)
70.950 Black
70.957 Flat Red
70.953 Flat Yellow
70.837 Pale Sand
70.951 White

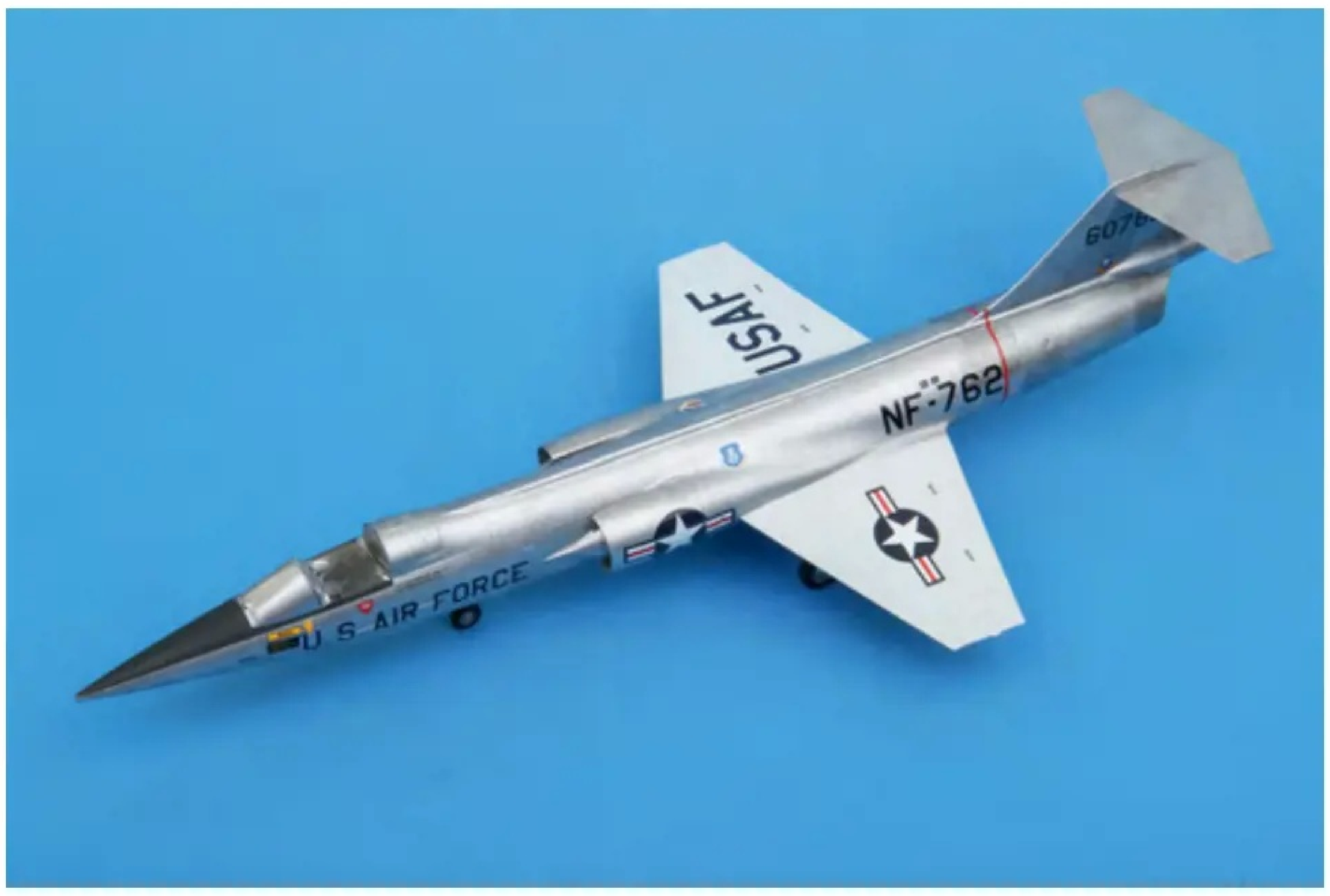


▲ Tonal variations between panels was taken care of by brush-painting thinned Leadbelcher in several coats.

▲ Once complete, the natural-metal effects gave a pleasing amount of tonal variation on the fuselage and tail surfaces.



▲ Plenty of masking was needed for the white and grey surfaces on the wings.



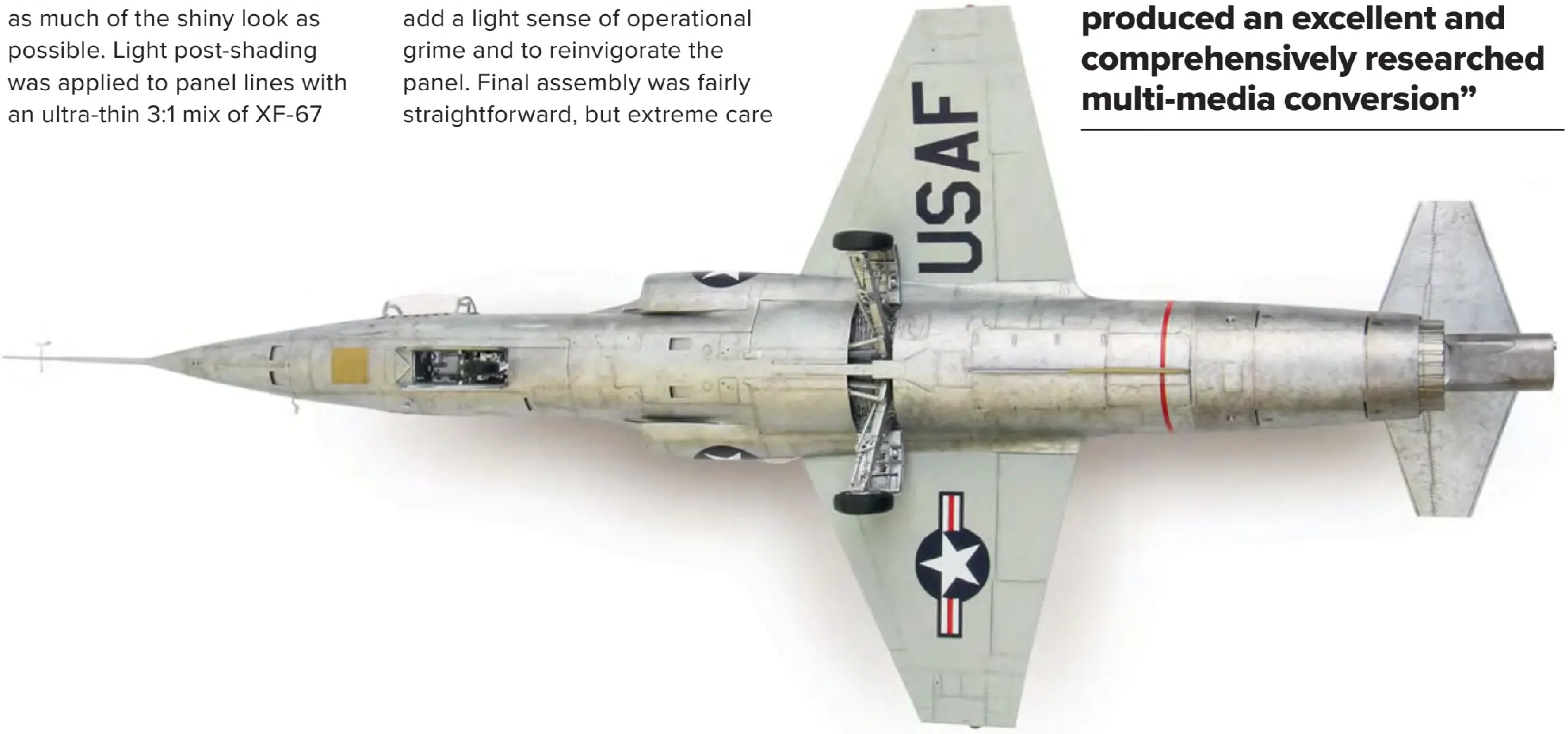
▲ Caracal's decals were splendidsettling well into the moulded detail and really brought the scheme to life.

to create a slightly more uniform surface finish… while retaining as much of the shiny look as possible. Light post-shading was applied to panel lines with an ultra-thin 3:1 mix of XF-67 Red Brown and Flat Black, with a dash of X-21 Flat Base, just to add a light sense of operational grime and to reinvigorate the panel. Final assembly was fairly straightforward, but extreme care was necessary with the ultra-fragile pitot-mounted vanes.

"Ridley… you got any Beemans?"

Hypersonic Models has produced an excellent and comprehensively researched multi-media conversion set that allows a modeller to produce an NF-104A from Kinetic's 1/48 F-104G Starfighter kit. It is quite an involved and lengthy project but the quality is superb and it results in a real conversation piece. You could even watch the *The Right Stuff* to get you in the mood! AMW

> **"Hypersonic Models has produced an excellent and comprehensively researched multi-media conversion"**



Distributed by GLOW2B

TWIN SET
BISMARCK + TIRPITZ

REF: 85078

Scale: 1/400	327 + 337 Pieces
	620 x 90 mm

TWIN SET

2X

Maquette a monter inclus
Model Kit inclusive
Modellbausatz enthalten

More about
this product

BISMARCK
+
TIRPITZ
COLLECTION HISTORIQUE
2X

Bismarck „Rheinübung“,
May 1941

+

Tirpitz „Rösselsprung“,
July 1942

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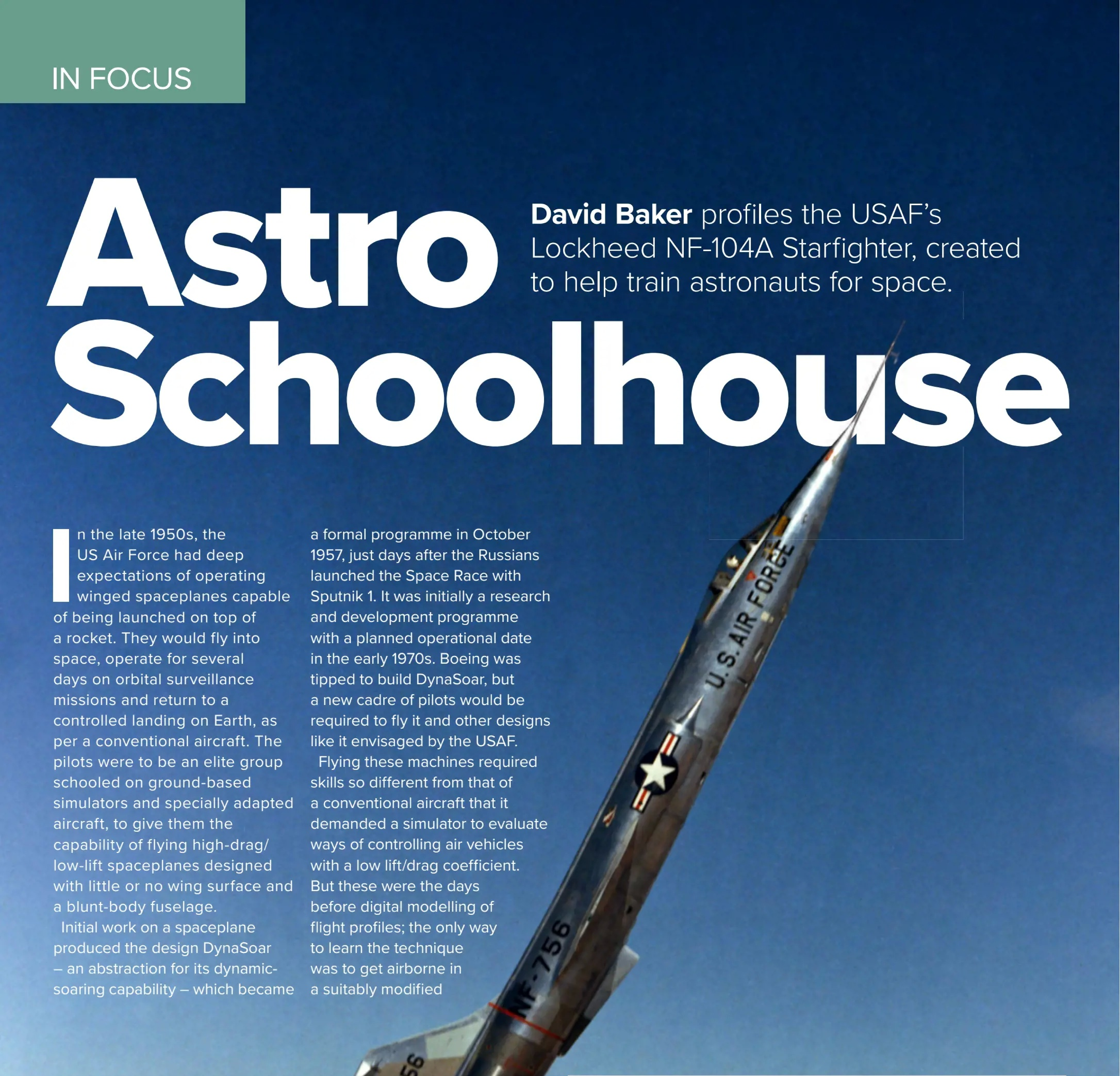
Astro Schoolhouse

David Baker profiles the USAF's Lockheed NF-104A Starfighter, created to help train astronauts for space.



In the late 1950s, the US Air Force had deep expectations of operating winged spaceplanes capable of being launched on top of a rocket. They would fly into space, operate for several days on orbital surveillance missions and return to a controlled landing on Earth, as per a conventional aircraft. The pilots were to be an elite group schooled on ground-based simulators and specially adapted aircraft, to give them the capability of flying high-drag/low-lift spaceplanes designed with little or no wing surface and a blunt-body fuselage.

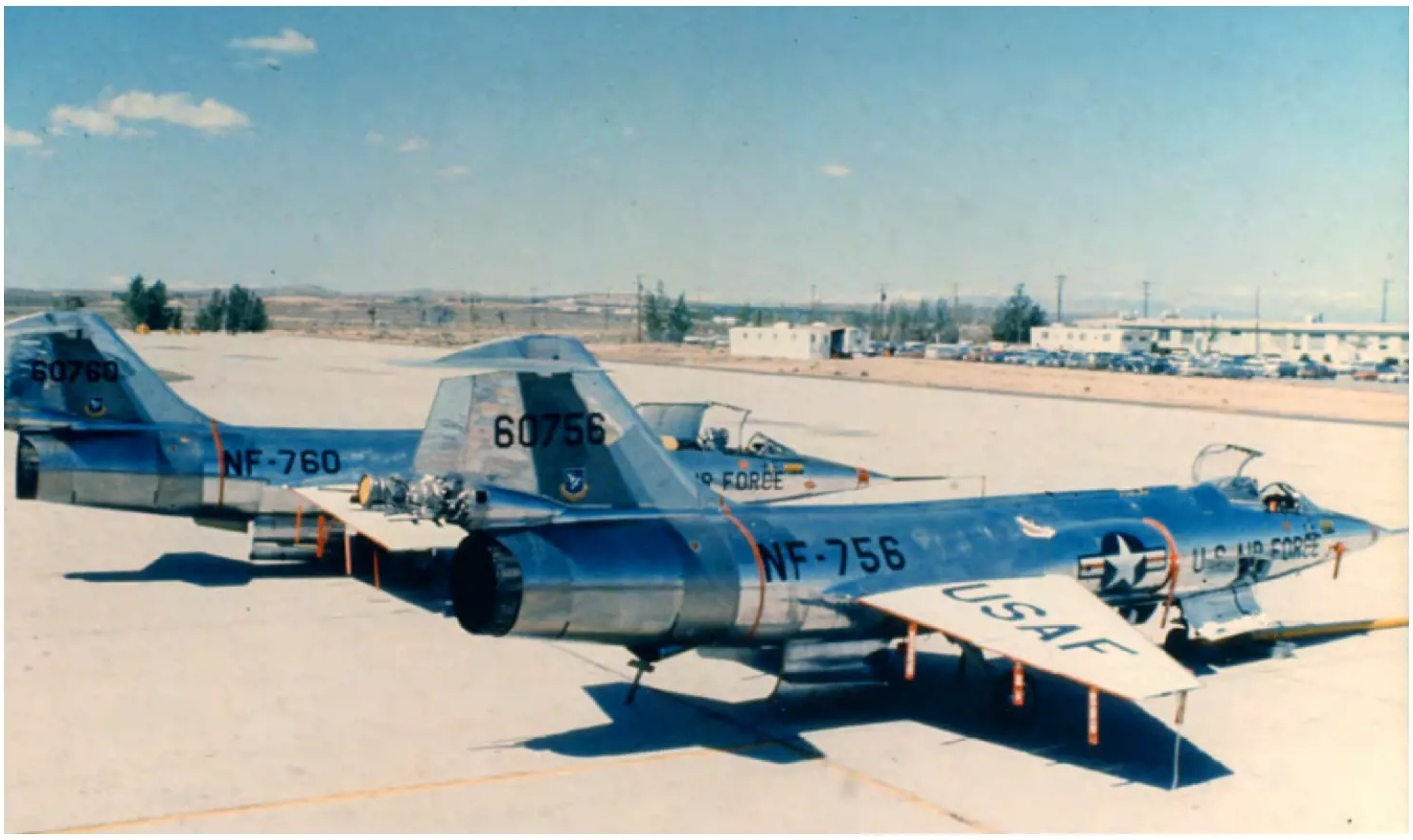
Initial work on a spaceplane produced the design DynaSoar – an abstraction for its dynamic-soaring capability – which became a formal programme in October 1957, just days after the Russians launched the Space Race with Sputnik 1. It was initially a research and development programme with a planned operational date in the early 1970s. Boeing was tipped to build DynaSoar, but a new cadre of pilots would be required to fly it and other designs like it envisaged by the USAF.

Flying these machines required skills so different from that of a conventional aircraft that it demanded a simulator to evaluate ways of controlling air vehicles with a low lift/drag coefficient. But these were the days before digital modelling of flight profiles; the only way to learn the technique was to get airborne in a suitably modified

NF-104A 56-0756 makes a rocket-boosted zoom flight on October 4, 1964. (USAF)

S. AIR FORCE
RESCUE
EMERGENCY ENTRANCE CONTROL ON OTHER SIDE
CANOPY RELEASE

▶ **Maj Charles 'Chuck' Yeager in the cockpit of an NF-104A before his near-fatal flight in airframe 56-762.** (USAF)



▲ **Two of the three NF-104A Aerospace Trainers clearly displaying extended wingtips and rocket motor nozzles. Note the fairing for the nearest Starfighter's motor has been removed.** (USAF)

aircraft and develop the requisite flying skills for these weird lifting-bodies in the air.

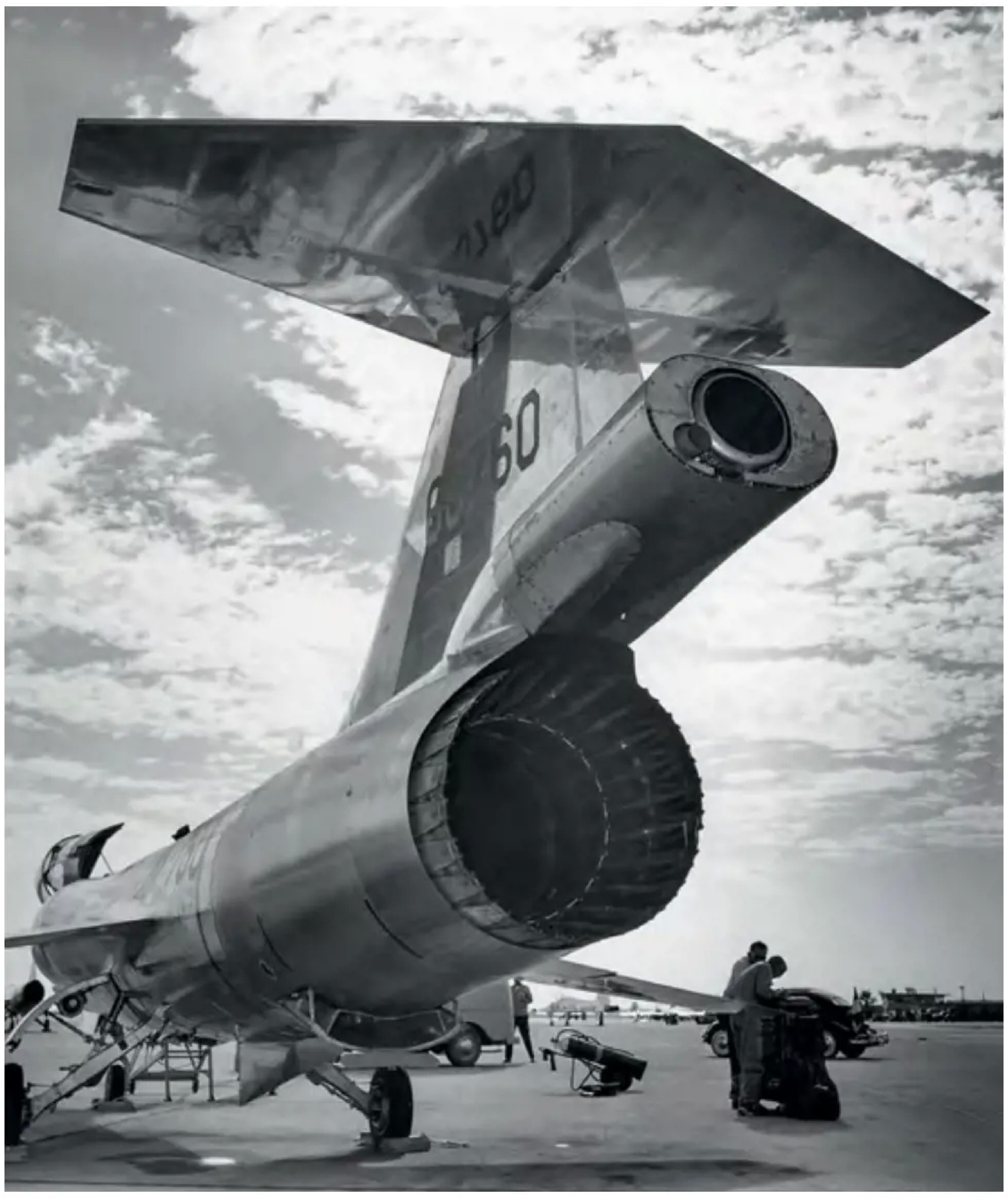
Blending air and space as the USAF anticipated, it renamed the Experimental Test Pilot's School at Edwards AFB, California, as the Aerospace Research Pilot's School (ARPS) on October 12, 1961. Candidates from the USAF, US Navy Test Pilot programme and the UK's Empire Test Pilot School would complete basic training before receiving eight months of aerospace instruction to prepare them for the new flying machines. The four instructors included Maj Frank Borman (later a NASA astronaut who commanded a Gemini mission and Apollo 8, the first flight into lunar orbit), Maj Robert Buchanan, Lt Col Tom McElmurry and William Schweikhard.

High flight

The USAF sought an aircraft suitable for adaptation into a trainer for aerospace pilots. At one point it considered a plan from North American to modify an X-15 rocket-plane into a two-seater with wheels instead of skids for landing, but that would have been prohibitively expensive. Powered by a single rocket motor, the X-15 had to be carried into the air by a B-52 and that was also a costly exercise. Something simpler and less budget-busting was necessary. Self-evident was the need to acquire skills in flying vehicles such as the X-15, but on a more routine schedule.

In 1959, NASA obtained a Lockheed JF-104 (55-2961) and modified it to operate with a reaction control system (RCS) for flights in the upper atmosphere, where aerodynamic controls were much less effective. The X-15 would need such a system for extreme-altitude ascents and NASA wanted to test the concept on a conventional aircraft first. The JF-104 developed techniques of switching between aerodynamic controls and rocket thrusters according to the density of the atmosphere, a concept first tested on the Bell X-1B rocket research aircraft.

The JF-104 made 28 flights between 1959-1961, reaching 82,000ft during one, but the USAF wanted more and selected three F-104A airframes (56-

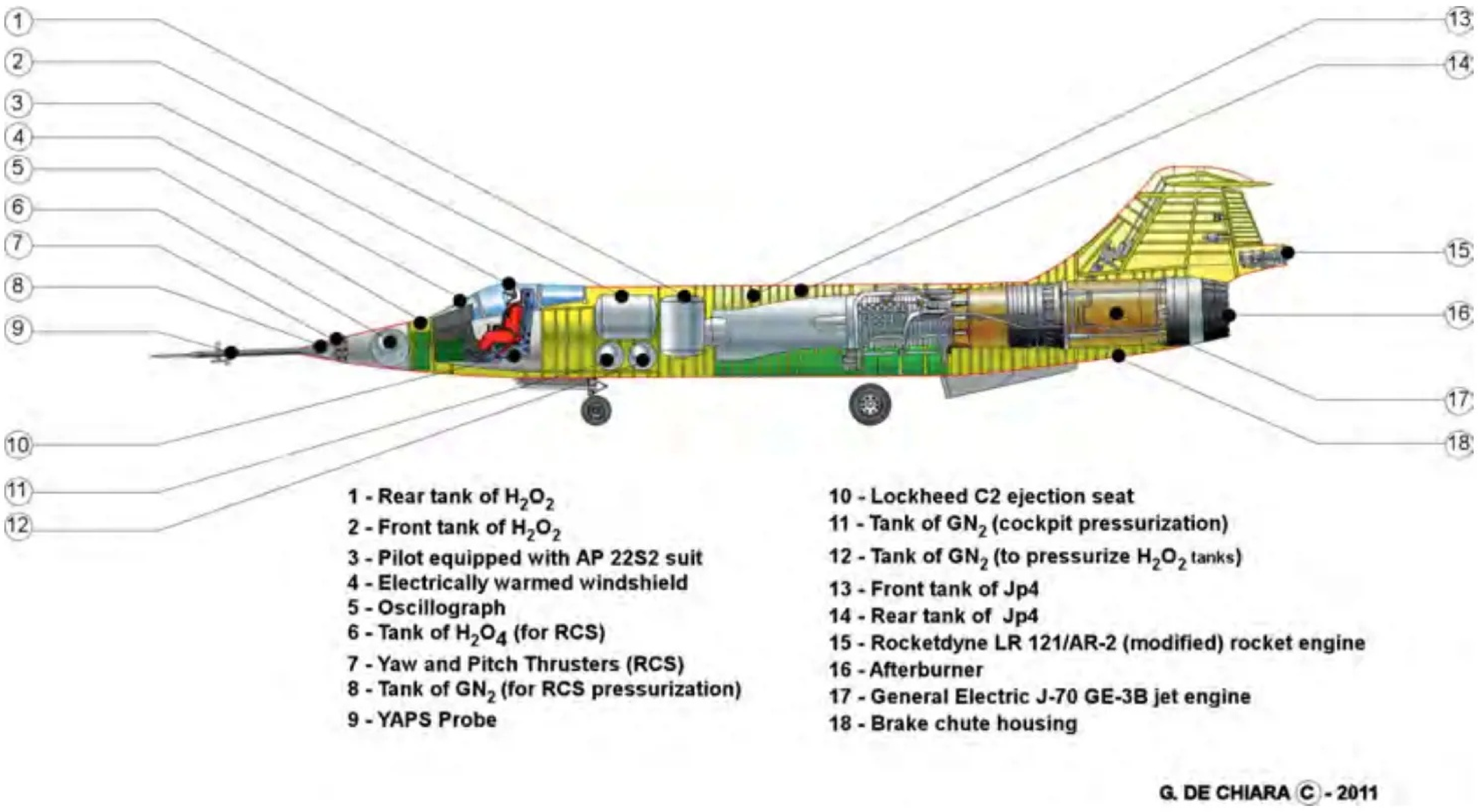


▲ **Here, the rocket-motor nozzle and fairing extends from the tail of NF-104A airframe 56-0760, with a reduced rudder area incorporated into the tail from an F-104G.** (Lockheed)

▲ **The JF-104 55-2961 during tests with attitude control thrusters, prior to their incorporation into the NF-104As.** (USAF)

▲ **The tail section of 56-0760 showing the cooling jacket and fairing for the rocket motor. The extended wingtips are also visible.** (Lockheed)

0756, 56-0760 and 56-0762) for modification into aerospace trainers designated NF-104A, removing their armament, auxiliary fuel tank, radar and fire control system. Each would receive the tail from a TF-104G which, being a two-seat trainer, had a larger rudder that would compensate for the area lost due to the fairing for a rocket motor being installed in the aft fuselage. The Rocketdyne AR2-3 motor was pitched at 5° to align the centre of thrust with the aircraft's centre of mass. It produced 6,000lb of thrust, an evolution of a smaller motor developed in 1953 and tested on 103 flights in a US Navy FJ-4F, plus 31 in a USAF F-86F. The motor was never adopted as a standard supplement to the turbojet engine for these combat types, but it provided Rocketdyne with valuable experience when the learning curve for any type of liquid-propellant rocket motor was steep.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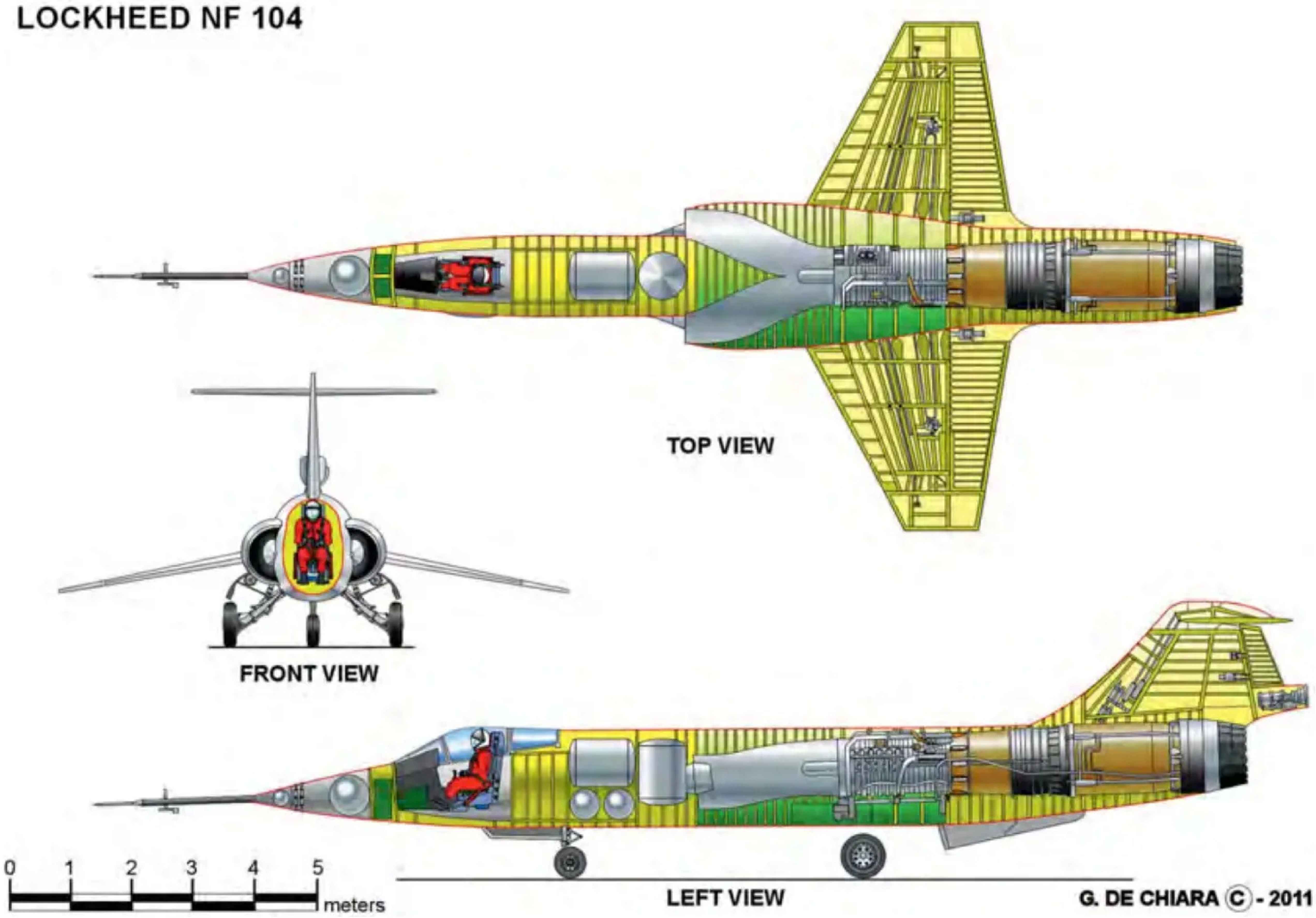
18
1 - Rear tank of H_2O_2
2 - Front tank of H_2O_2
3 - Pilot equipped with AP 22S2 suit
4 - Electrically warmed windshield
5 - Oscillograph
6 - Tank of H_2O_4 (for RCS)
7 - Yaw and Pitch Thrusters (RCS)
8 - Tank of GN_2 (for RCS pressurization)
9 - YAPS Probe
10 - Lockheed C2 ejection seat
11 - Tank of GN_2 (cockpit pressurization)
12 - Tank of GN_2 (to pressurize H_2O_2 tanks)
13 - Front tank of Jp4
14 - Rear tank of Jp4
15 - Rocketdyne LR 121/AR-2 (modified) rocket engine
16 - Afterburner
17 - General Electric J-70 GE-3B jet engine
18 - Brake chute housing
G. DE CHIARA © - 2011

▲ **A cutaway of the NF-104A with reconfigured aft section showing the rocker motor, hydrogen peroxide tanks and modified tail.** (Giuseppe de Chiaro)

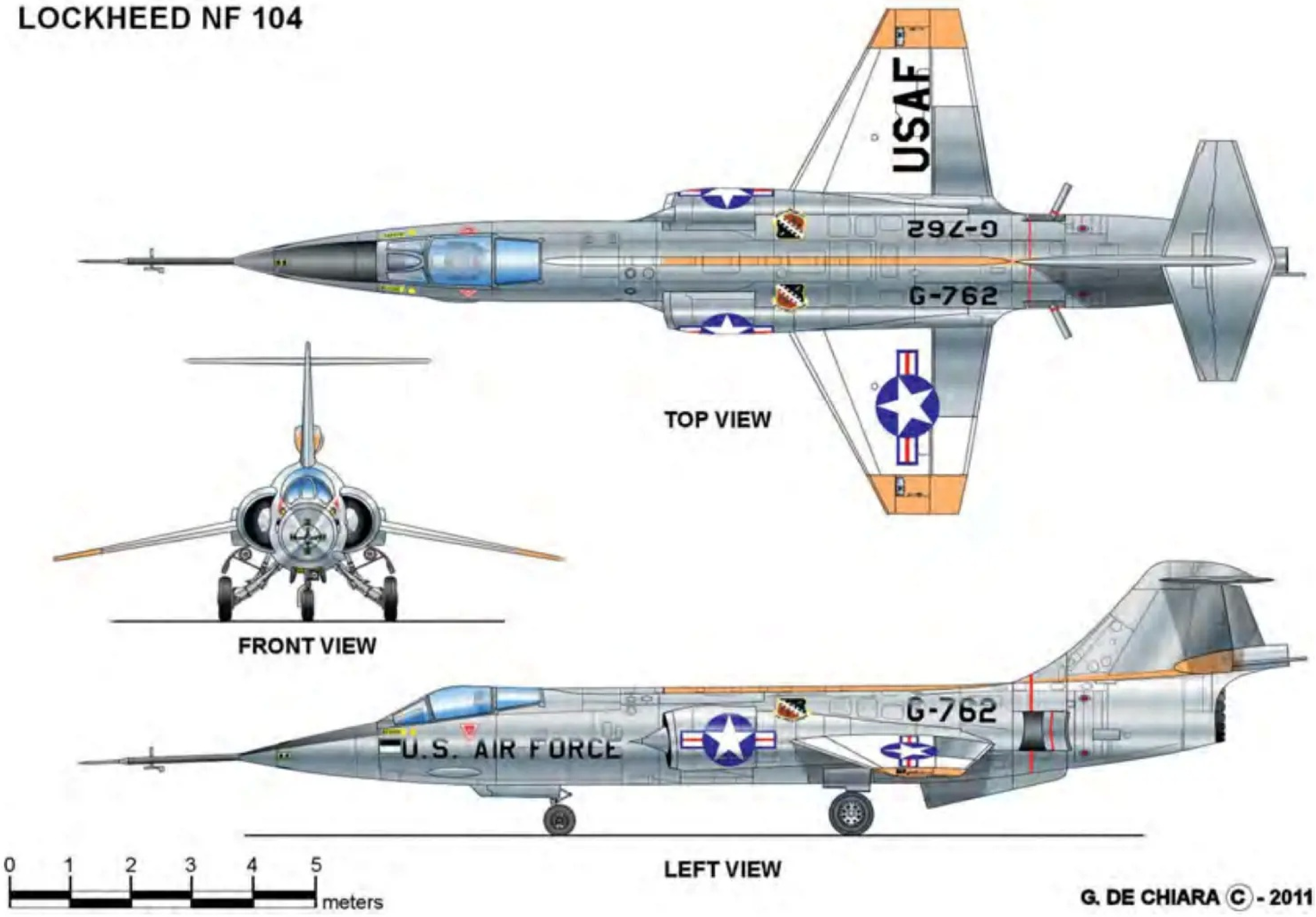

LOCKHEED NF 104
TOP VIEW
FRONT VIEW
LEFT VIEW
0
1
2
3
4
5
meters
G. DE CHIARA © - 2011

▲ **Internal configuration of the NF-104A.** (Giuseppe de Chiaro)

A big advantage in selecting this motor was that it ran on JP-4, the fuel carried by the NF-104A for its J79-GE-3B engine, and hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2) in a separate tank for combustion. But there were critics of the concept, which required the J79 to be shut down during operation of the rocket motor, incurring the risk of it not restarting for the approach and landing phase. The F-104 had a notoriously high landing speed due to its exceptionally low aspect ratio. While it would have the descent rate of a returning space vehicle, it needed power for a safe flare and touchdown, without which it would crash.

Fuel for the rocket motor came from the main fuel tank but the H_2O_2 was carried in two supplementary tanks for a total capacity of 226 gallons, sufficient for a burn duration of 100sec at a fuel/oxidiser mixture ratio of 1:6. These propellants were delivered to the rocket motor (which gained the service designation LR121-NA-1) by a turbopump driven by a gas generator, which was also powered by hydrogen peroxide reacting on a silver-plated screen serving as a catalyst. The superheated steam at 1,365°F would drive a turbine to rotate the two separate pumps mounted on a common shaft, with hydrogen peroxide circulating around the jacket of the combustion chamber to cool it.

The USAF set an altitude limit of 100,000ft as the transition point where aerodynamic control would no longer be effective. While the rocket motor would push the aerospace trainer beyond that altitude, the RCS would be essential for maintaining attitude control about all three axes, through thruster jets positioned strategically for controlling pitch, roll and yaw. Four pairs of thrusters were situated in the nose for pitch and yaw, with roll controlled via single thrusters on the upper and lower surfaces of the wingtips, each system having built-in redundancy. Each wing was extended by 24in to accommodate the roll thrusters, all of which operated through


LOCKHEED NF 104
TOP VIEW
FRONT VIEW
LEFT VIEW
USAF
U.S. AIR FORCE
G-762
0 1 2 3 4 5 meters
G. DE CHIARA © - 2011

▲ **Colour scheme for the NF-104A with white upper surface wing panels that were sometimes painted grey.** (Giuseppe de Chiaro)

a supply of hydrogen peroxide coming into contact with silver screens and producing a decomposed gas.

Feisty machine

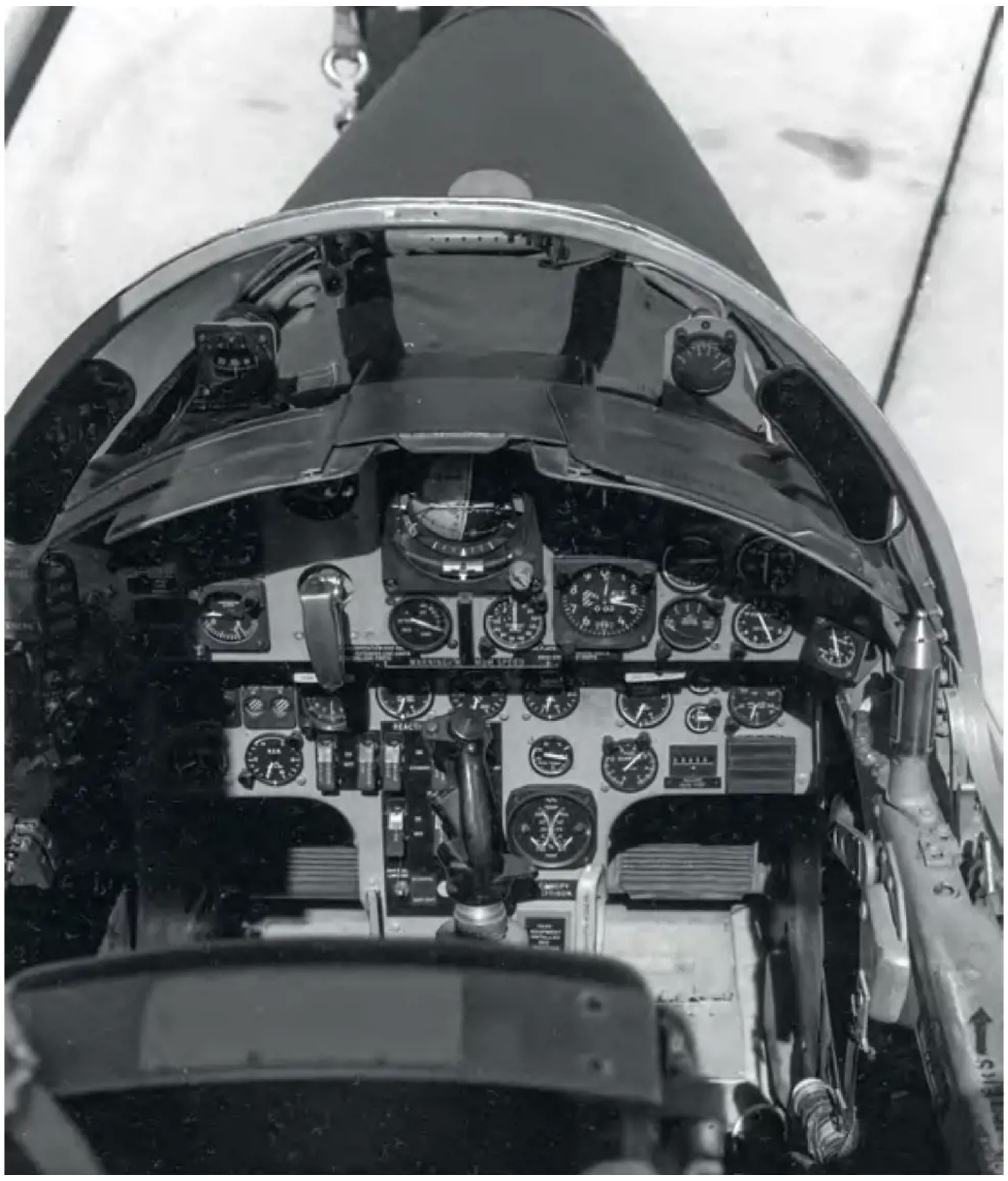
The flight profile for the NF-104A Aerospace Trainer involved a zoom climb to an altitude above 100,000ft, beginning with a maximum pitch of 50° and Mach 2.15, with a further climb under rocket power and approximately 90 seconds of weightlessness before beginning a descent, including a restart on the J79. Fully fuelled, the NF-104A had a gross weight of 21,900lb and with the wingtip extensions a maximum span of 25.83ft and a length of 62.36ft, carrying 4,960lb of JP-4 and 2,730lb of hydrogen peroxide.

Before the three NF-104A s were delivered, beginning with 56-0762 on July 9, 1963, Lockheed began a series of 50 flight tests. These revealed the need for a modified engine inlet cone, which had been optimised for Mach 2 and not the 2.2-2.5 that the aircraft would actually experience – a problem solved by extending the cone by 20in compared to a standard Starfighter. On October 23, 1963, Lockheed test pilot Jack Woodman reached 118,000ft, but entered a flat spin, only recovering at an altitude of 35,000ft to relight the engine and land. Meanwhile, the USAF accepted delivery of the first NF-104A on October 1.

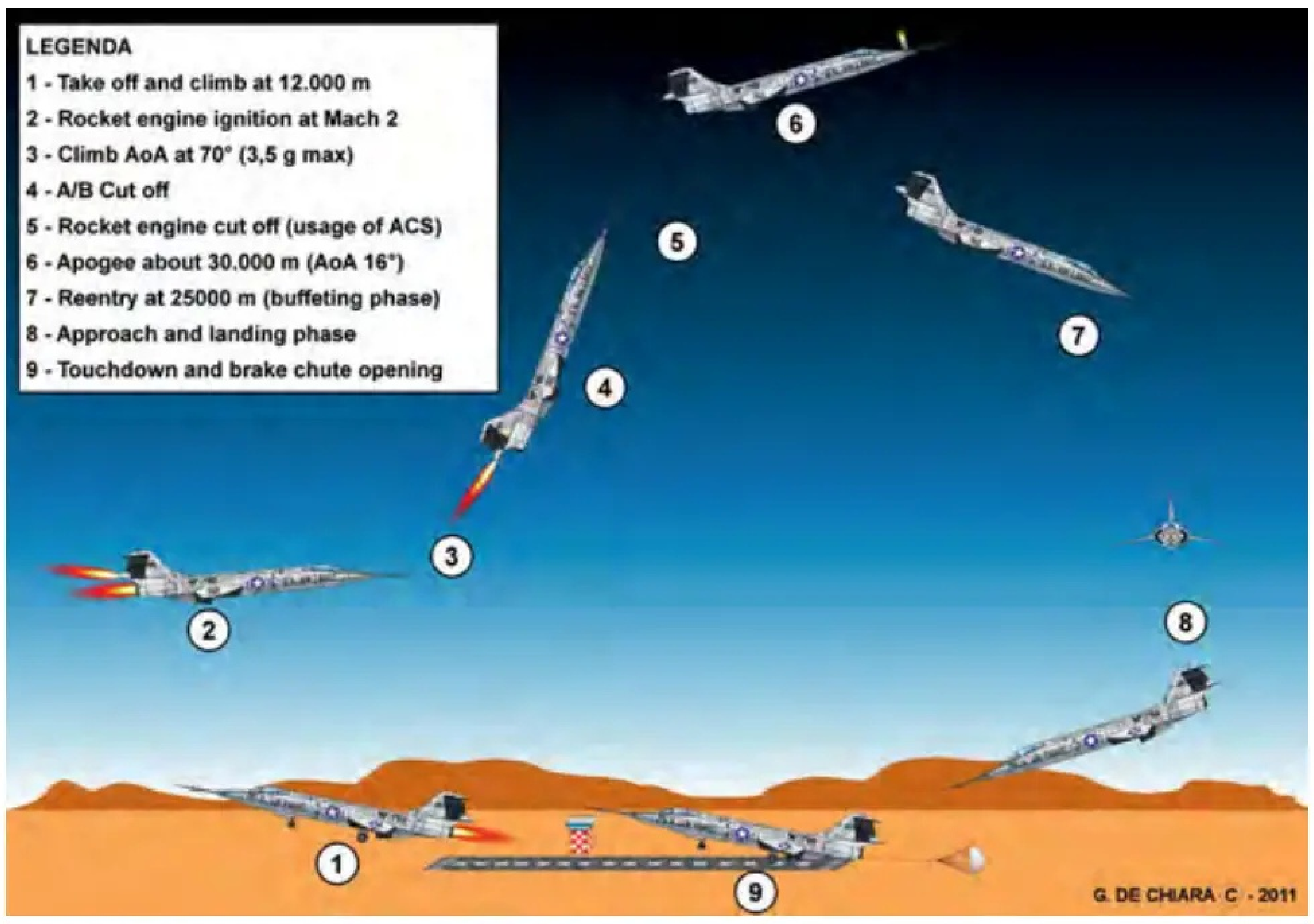
Commandant of the Aerospace Research Pilots School, Col Charles E ‘Chuck’ Yeager seized on the opportunity afforded by the aircraft to challenge the then recently claimed altitude record of 113,982ft achieved by the Soviet MiG E-166. On October 22 and 23, both Maj Robert Smith and Jack Woodman exceeded that height, officially regaining for the US the absolute altitude record by reaching 118,860ft on November 15.

On December 6, 1963, Woodman reached 120,800ft, the highest ever attained by an NF-104A. Four days later, Yeager himself took to the air in 56-0762, reaching 108,700ft, during which he lost attitude control and entered a stable flat spin from which he could not recover. Ejecting at 11,000ft, he suffered extensive facial burns, while the aircraft crashed on the desert floor.

That same day, DynaSoar was cancelled and the USAF lost ▶



▲ **The modified cockpit for the NF-104 – otherwise typical for a 1960s design – which included a thruster control lever.** (Lockheed)


LEGENDA
1 - Take off and climb at 12.000 m
2 - Rocket engine ignition at Mach 2
3 - Climb AoA at 70° (3,5 g max)
4 - A/B Cut off
5 - Rocket engine cut off (usage of ACS)
6 - Apogee about 30.000 m (AoA 16°)
7 - Reentry at 25000 m (buffeting phase)
8 - Approach and landing phase
9 - Touchdown and brake chute opening
1
2
3
4
5
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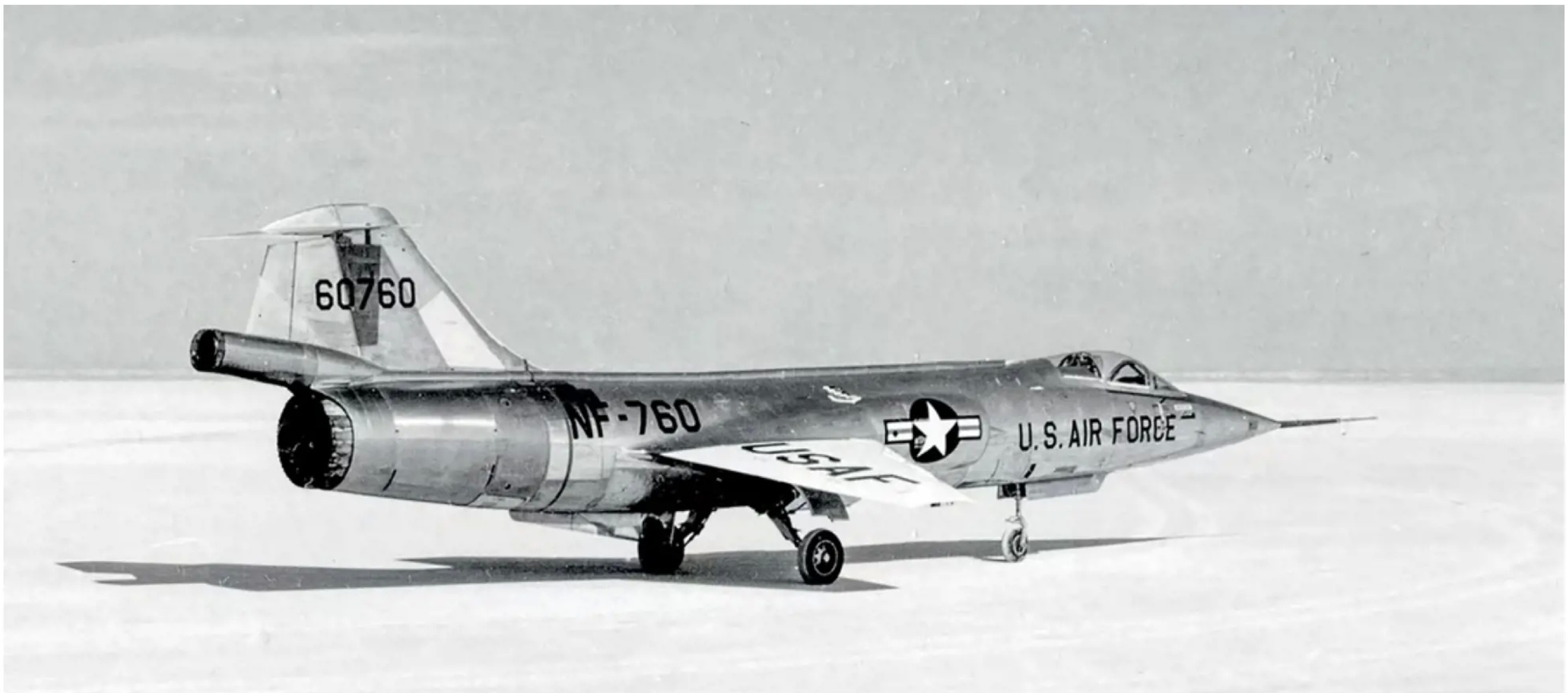
8
9
G. DE CHIARA C - 2011

▲ **The flight profile for an NF-104A zoom climb.** (Giuseppe de Chiaro)

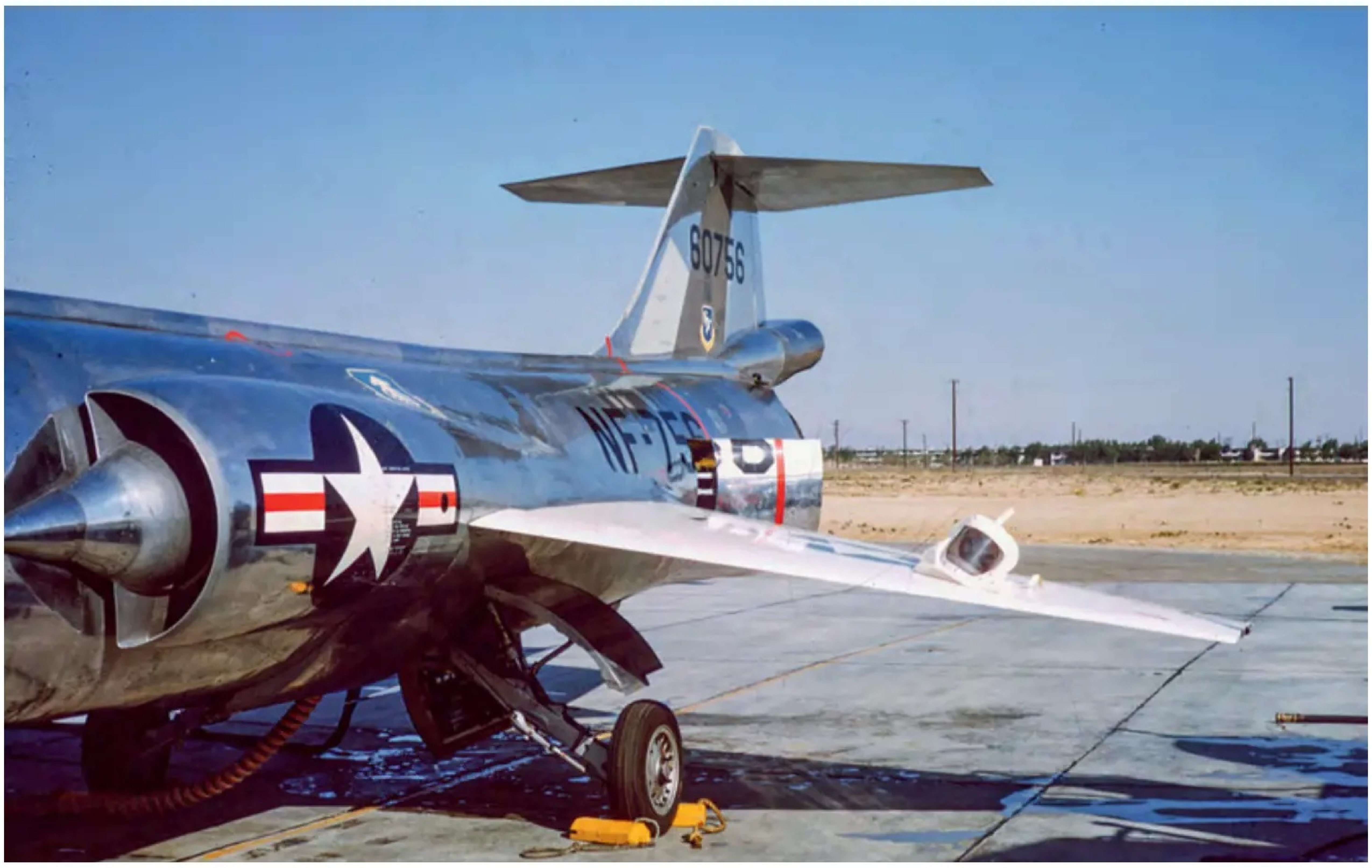


▲ **The blended fairing for the externally mounted rocket motor is clearly visible in this view of 56-0760.** (USAF)

its spaceplane. The near fatality involving Yeager forced a review of the programme, determining inexperience at this flight regime and pilot error as the cause. In the following weeks, X-15 pilot Col William 'Pete' Knight, already selected as a DynaSoar pilot, flew the NF-104A four times, the only X-15 pilot to operate both types. But the purpose of the Aerospace Trainer programme evaporated with the cancellation of DynaSoar which, rebranded as the X-20, was never built.

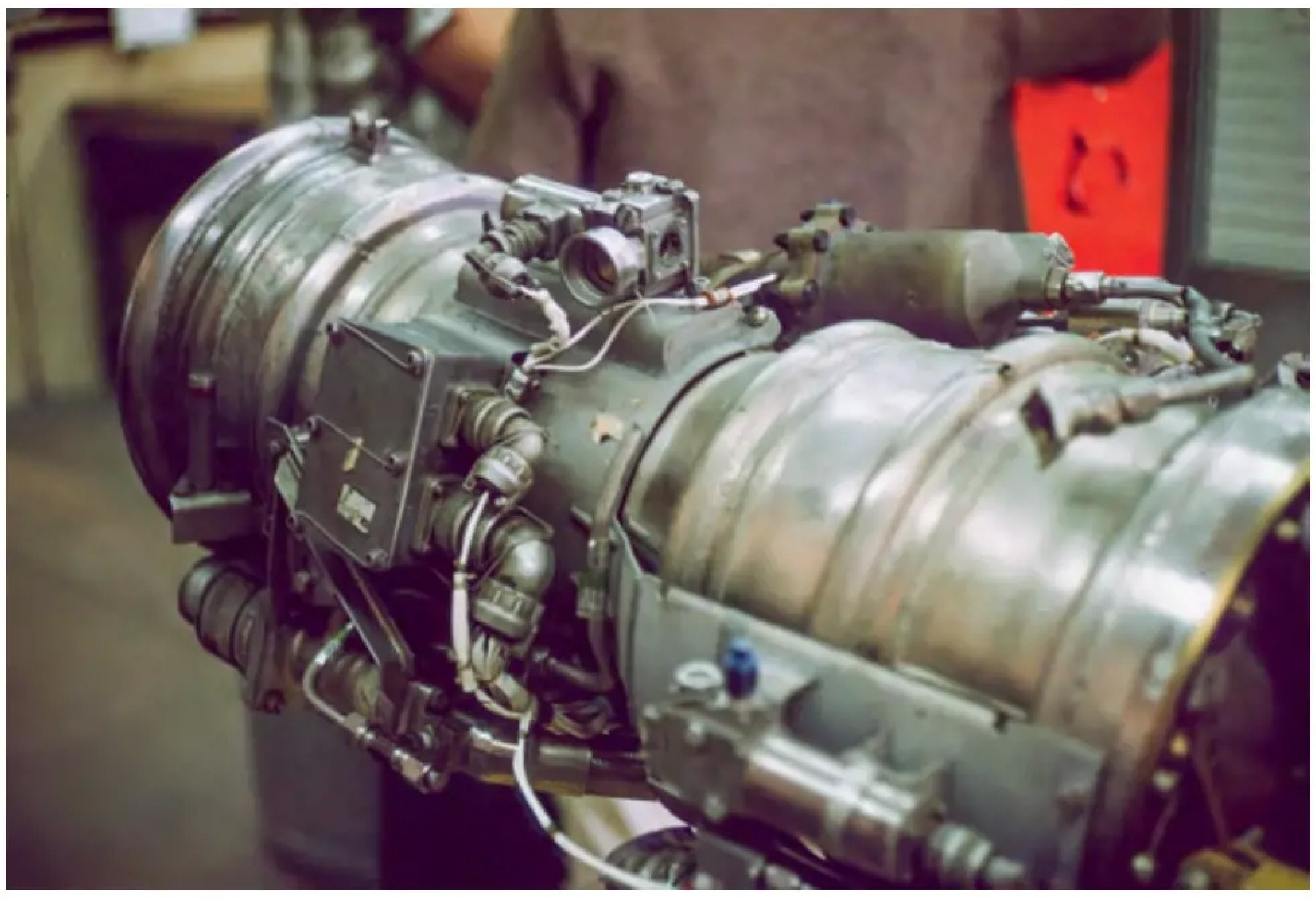
Flights with the two remaining NF-104As became sporadic and zoom flights did not resume until June 13, 1968, the first of 50 by test pilots until an event on June 15, 1971, permanently grounded the type. On that day, Capt Howard Thompson undertook a standard zoom in 56-0756 when an explosion rocked the aircraft, a second explosion tore off the rocket motor and part of the rudder before Thompson managed to wrestle it back to the ground. The final flight occurred on December 20, 1971, when Maj Ralph Graham took 56-0760 to an altitude of 100,200ft. It resides today as a gate guardian at Edwards Air Force Base, California.

However, there is a postscript to the story. The USAF eventually got its spaceplane, but it would be an unmanned vehicle built by Boeing from an abandoned NASA concept. Known as the X-37B, two were constructed for what are considered some of the most secret space missions ever flown. The first was placed in orbit on April 22, 2010, and lasted 224 days. The seventh flight of the aircarft returned to Earth on March 7, 2025, after 434 days in orbit, but an earlier mission lasted 908 days.



▲ **The rocket motor during a ground test to calibrate thrust levels.** (USAF)

▶ **The NF-104A at Edwards Air Force Base. Note the white upper wing surface and extended air-intake cone.** (USAF)



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HEIGHT: 280MM
NO. OF PARTS: APPX 600

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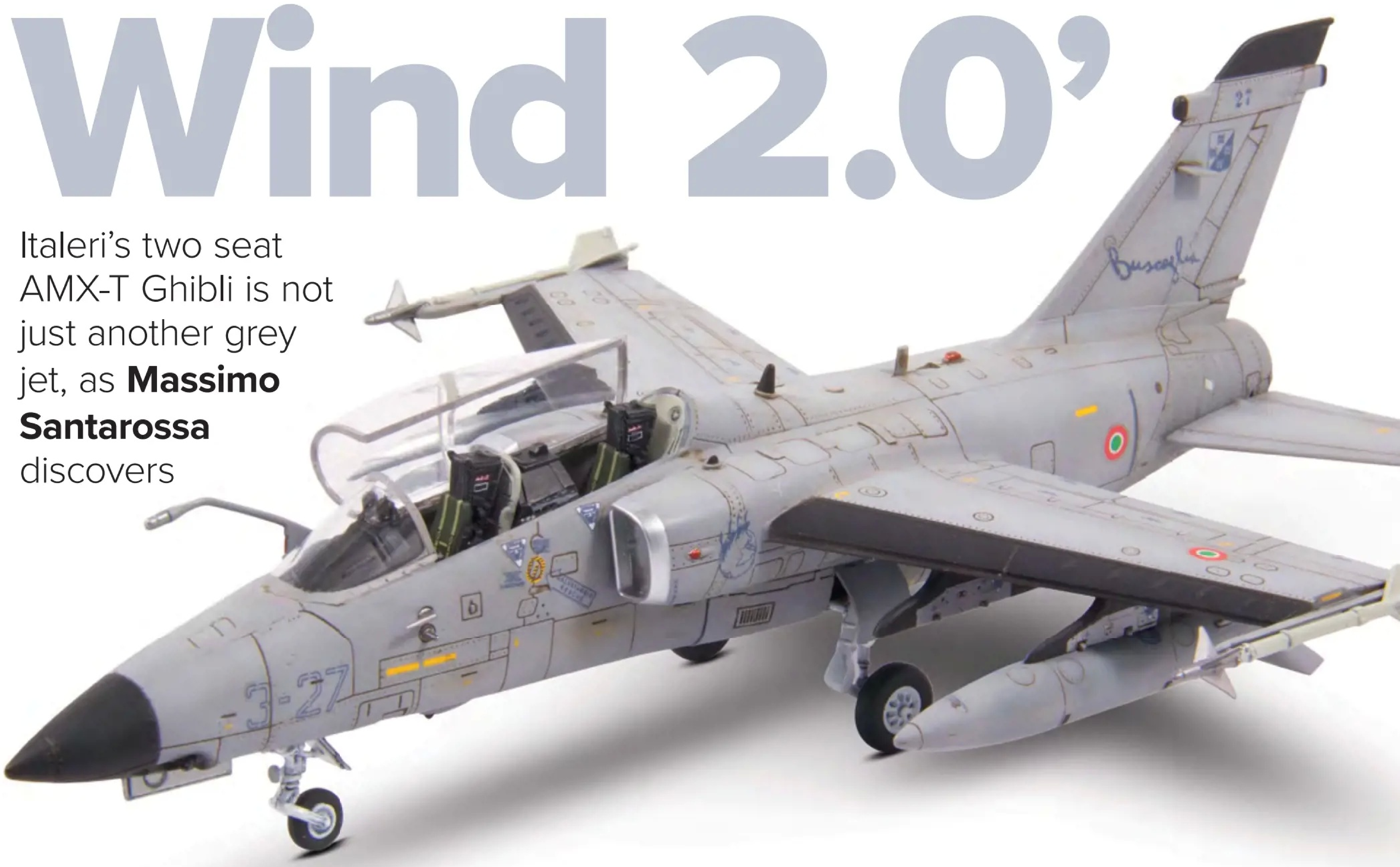
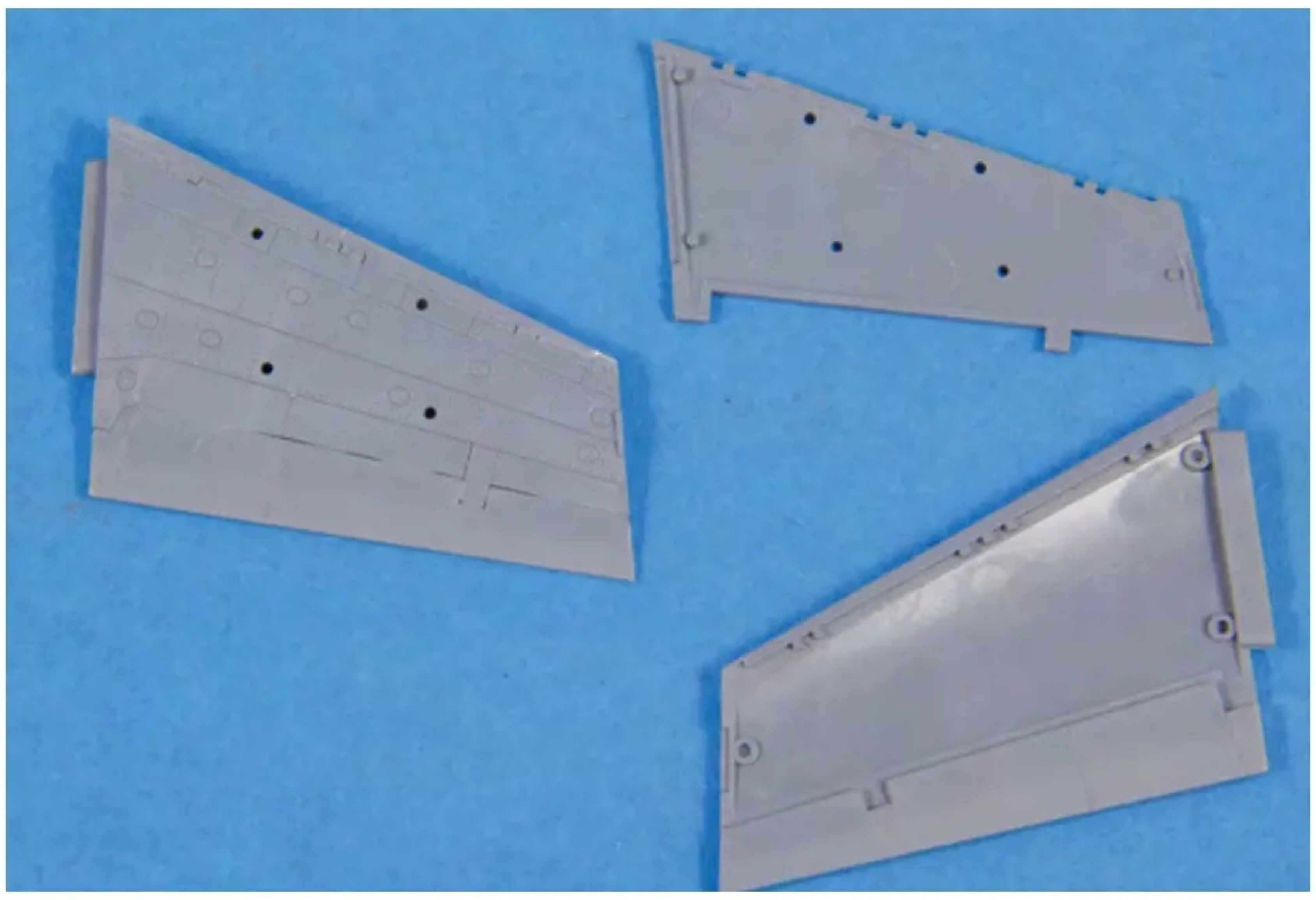
Desert Wind 2.0’

Italeri’s two seat AMX-T Ghibli is not just another grey jet, as **Massimo Santarossa** discovers

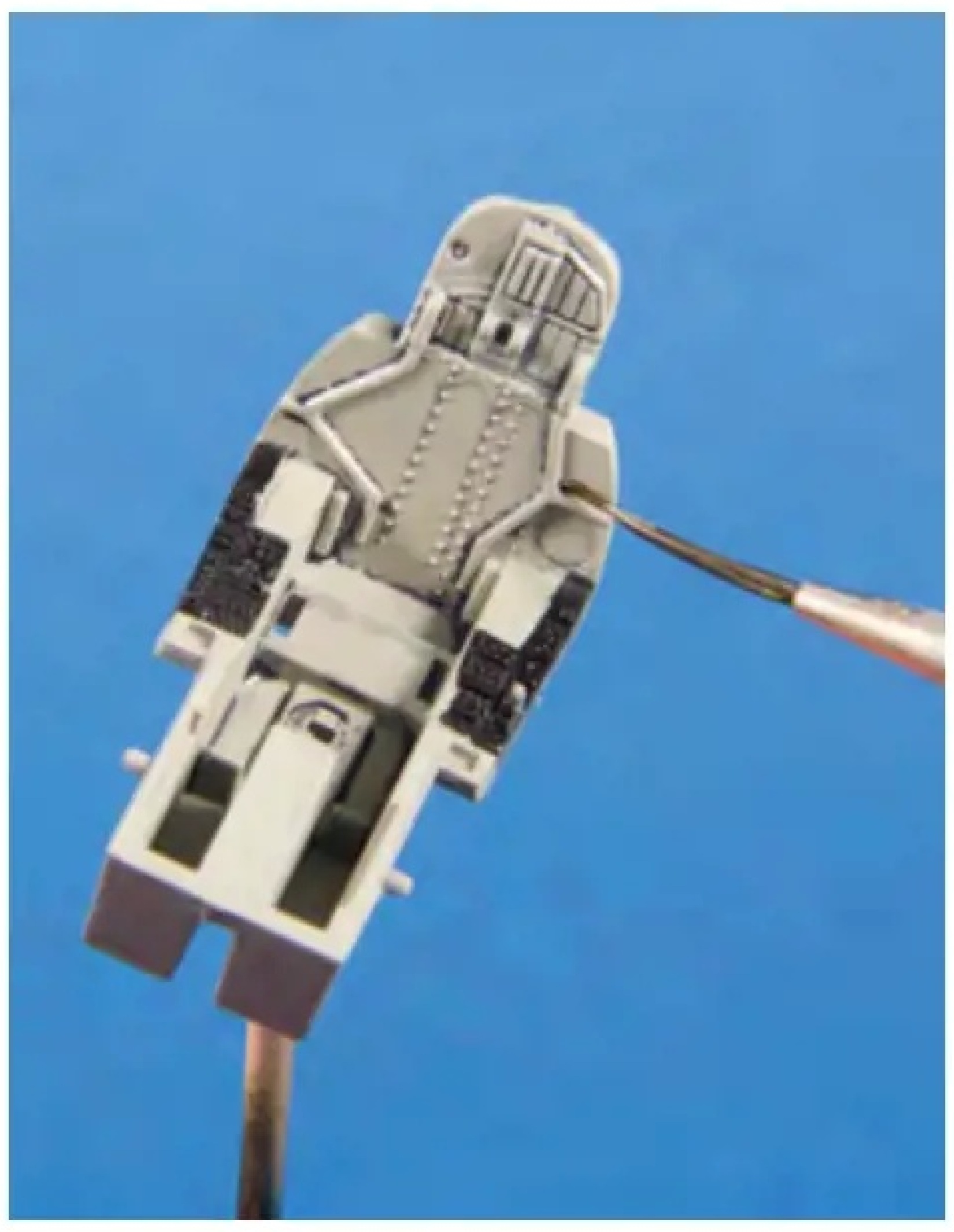


AMX International’s Ghibli (derived from the Arabic for ‘south wind’) was a joint venture between Italy and Brazil in the 1980s. Italy needed a replacement for the Fiat G.91, and Brazil for the Aermacchi/Embraer MB.326. First flight took place in Italy on May 15, 1984, and the two nations eventually produced 230 airframes.

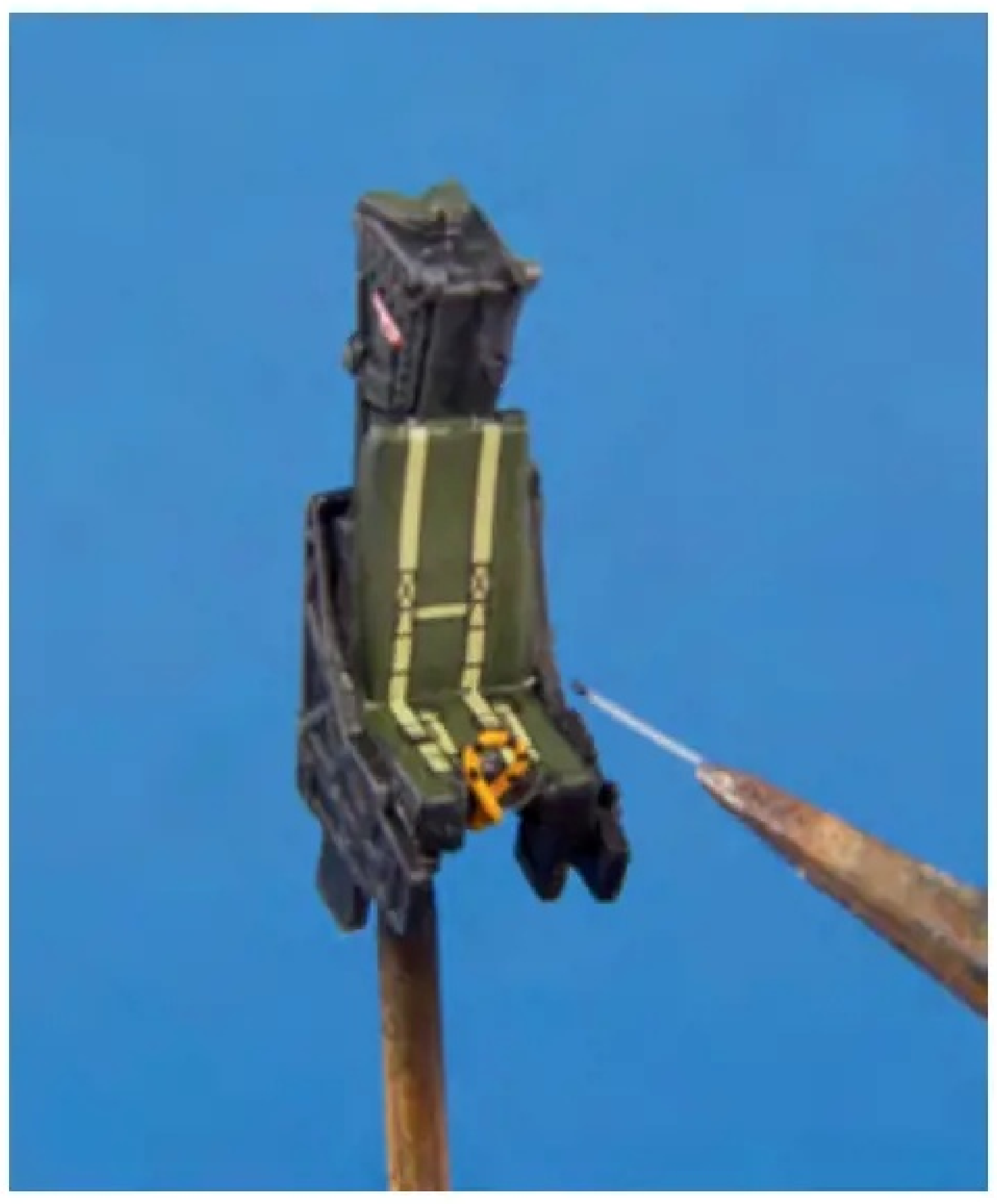
Despite the real machine being in service for almost four decades and serving in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Libya, models of this fighter-bomber have been hard to come by. There have been limited-run kits of variable quality, with Kinetic and Hobby Boss finally tackling this subject in 1/48, starting ten years ago. But it took until 2023 for the market to get a mainstream, 1/72 injection-moulded AMX. Initially, the single seat version was released by Italeri (see *AMW* January 2024



▲ This new tooling’s engineering was exemplified by the design of the wings. The lower half fitted into the top along natural panel lines, with no leading-edge seams to fill or sand.



▲ The cockpit was painted Flat Gull Grey then detailed and gloss coated. A wash of Payne’s Grey oil helped to accentuate the fine moulded detail.

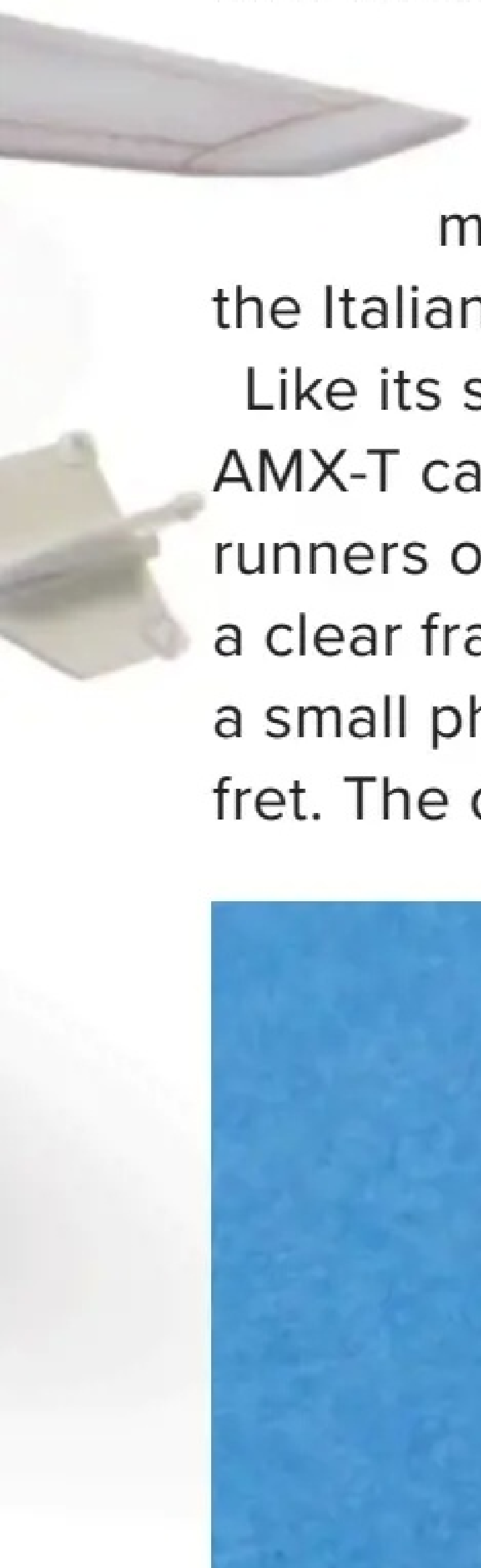


▲ A single toothbrush bristle was used to paint black stripes on the length of yellow wire, replicating the seat-pan firing handle. Note how two-dimensional, the kit seatbelt decals appear.

MODEL SPEC

AMX-T
By: Italeri
Stock code: 1471
Scale: 1/72
Price: £29.99
Available From: www.hobbyco.net

AMX-T
N. 1471
1:72
ITALERI



or www.keymodeworld.com for a full build), with the two-seater now becoming available. What is ironic is that we are receiving a quality model of the type just as the Italian Air Force has retired it.

Like its single-seat brother, the AMX-T came moulded on two runners of grey plastic along with a clear frame for the canopy, and a small photo-etched (PE) brass fret. The quality of engineering was evident via the recessed panel lines and rivet detail, and the absence of flash. Along with the airframe itself were AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, fuel tanks, two GBU-12 laser-guided bombs, plus a Litening laser-designator and Orpheus reconnaissance pod, though the latter was not used on the two-seater. A sheet of lovely Cartograf decals provided markings for four aircraft, all wearing overall grey.

Avanti!

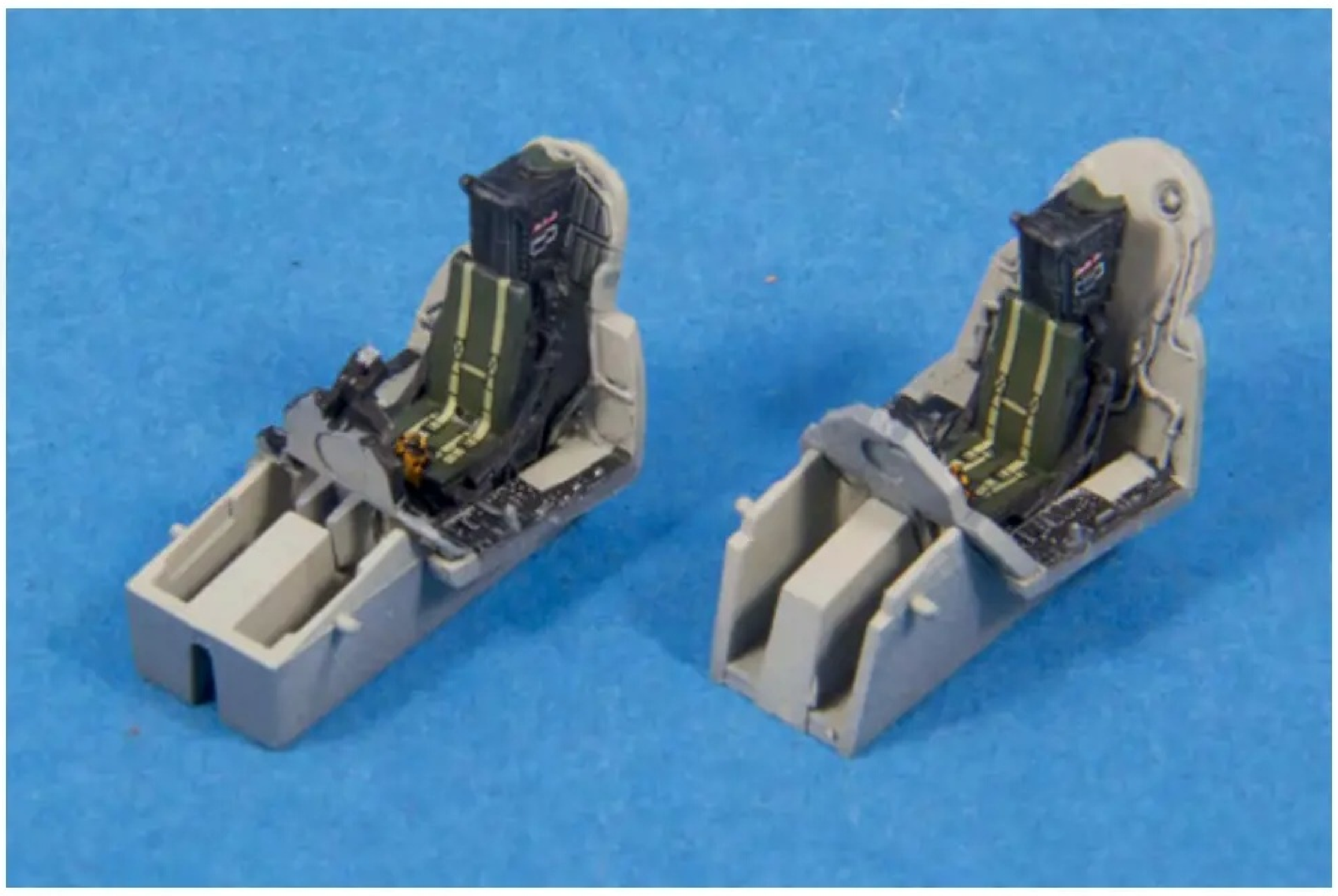
To give a sense of how the model would build, the wings were assembled first. These came in the traditional upper and lower halves; however, the leading and trailing edges were incorporated into the top portion, ensuring thin edges with no nasty seam to neaten. The lower section inserted into its partner along naturally occurring panel lines, making for a crisp, neat assembly. If the rest of the model was anything like the mainplanes, this build would be enjoyable indeed.

The two tubs that form the cockpit, along with the fuselage sidewalls, were painted Flat Gull Grey, while the Martin-Baker Mk.10 ejection seats received Tamiya Flat Black frames with green cushions. They were reasonably well detailed for styrene seats, missing just belts and firing handles. The former were provided for by decals decals, and though printed decently, they lacked depth. Looking back, PE or paper/masking tape belts would have been a better option. As for the firing handles, these were created with yellow wire, which was bent to shape and given the trademark black stripes.

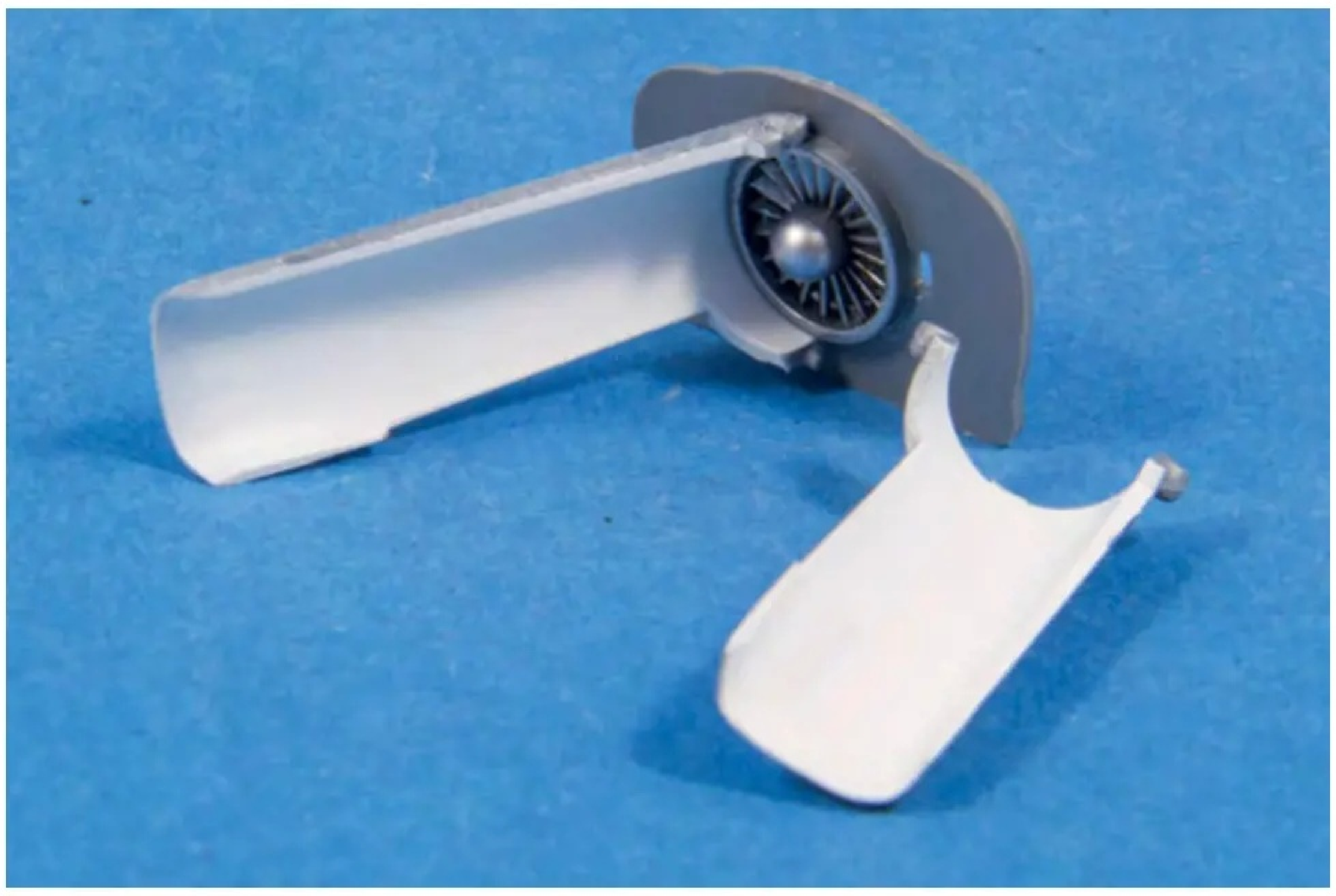
After painting the side consoles and other details, the cockpits were gloss-coated. Just the front cockpit's instrument panel was supplied as a decal, and then partially, so the remainder was hand-painted. An oil wash of Payne's Grey, along with dry-brushing, breathed life into both 'offices'. They were ready for installation once sealed under matt varnish.

Along with the cockpit, interior details comprised both undercarriage bays, the engine compressor fan and exhaust, and intake trunking. Engine components were painted with various shades of Alclad, while the rather ingenious two-piece V-duct was sprayed Flat White. The top of the main undercarriage bay forms part of the intake, so it was also painted this colour. The wells themselves were painted in a 1:1 mix of Flat White and Light Grey as it was felt that neat Flat White was too stark. As with the cockpit, the undercarriage bays were gloss-coated so their details could be highlighted with a wash of Payne's Grey, although in this case they were sealed with a satin coat instead of flat.

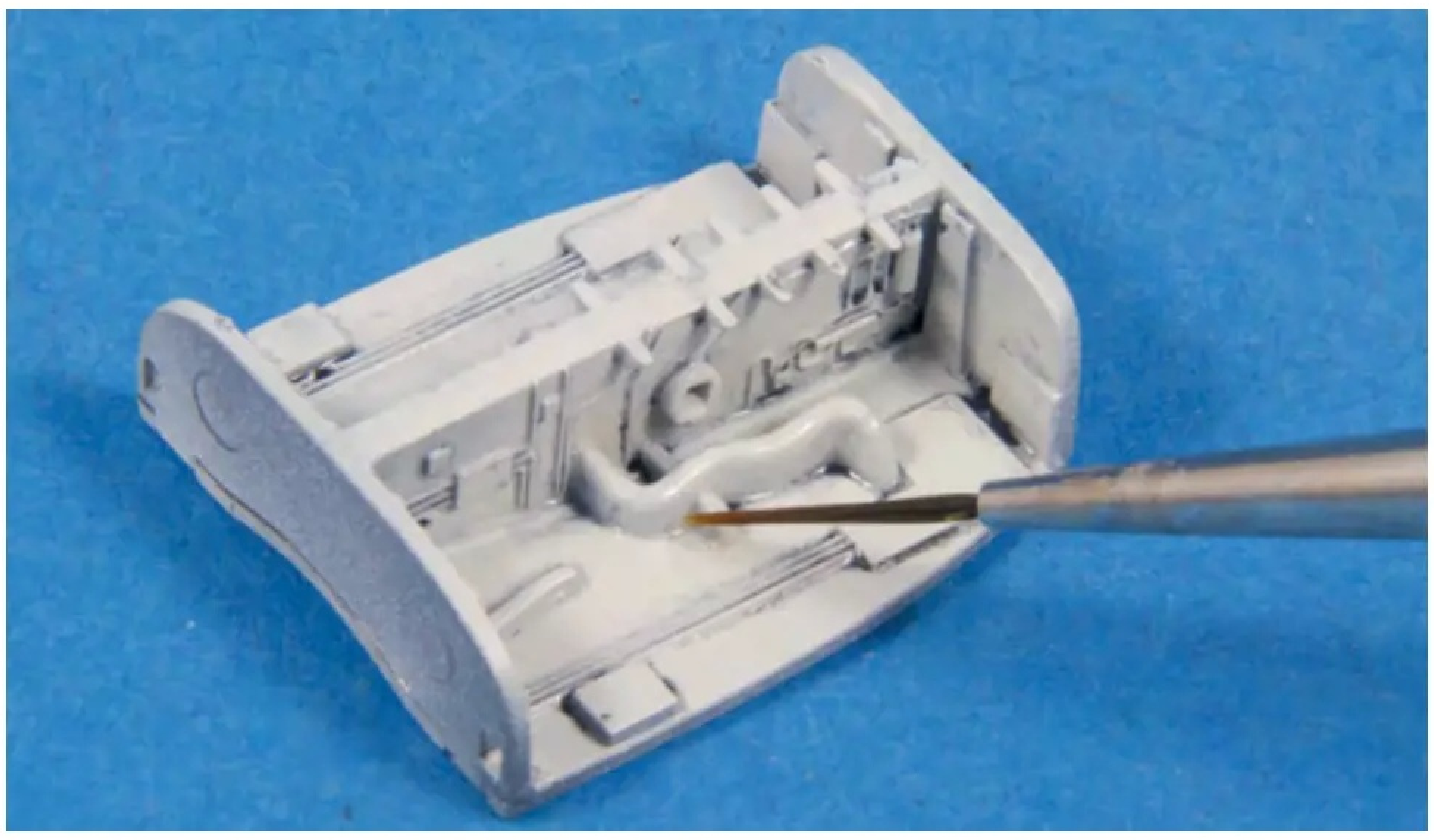
With thoughts of landing gear still in mind, the wheels and struts were duly addressed. These were painted Gloss White and, when dry, were again



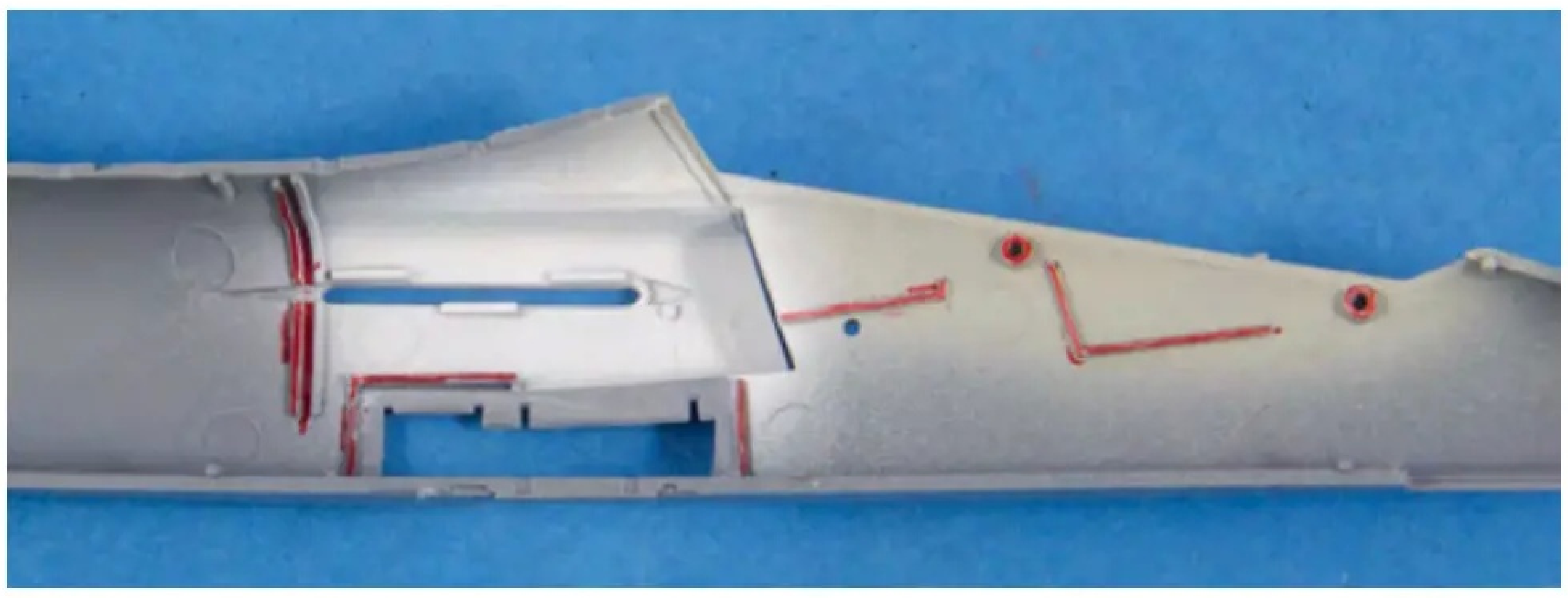
▲ Front and rear cockpit tubs ready for installation. As offered in the box they look fairly good, but hopefully aftermarket embellishments will appear.



▲ The air intake featured a V-shaped trunking which, when matched with the other sub-assemblies, resulted in a one-piece duct.



◀ The main undercarriage bay was painted in a Flat White/Light Grey mix, before receiving a wash of Payne's Grey oil to accentuate the moulded features. The top of the bay formed part of the intake trunk and as such was painted white.

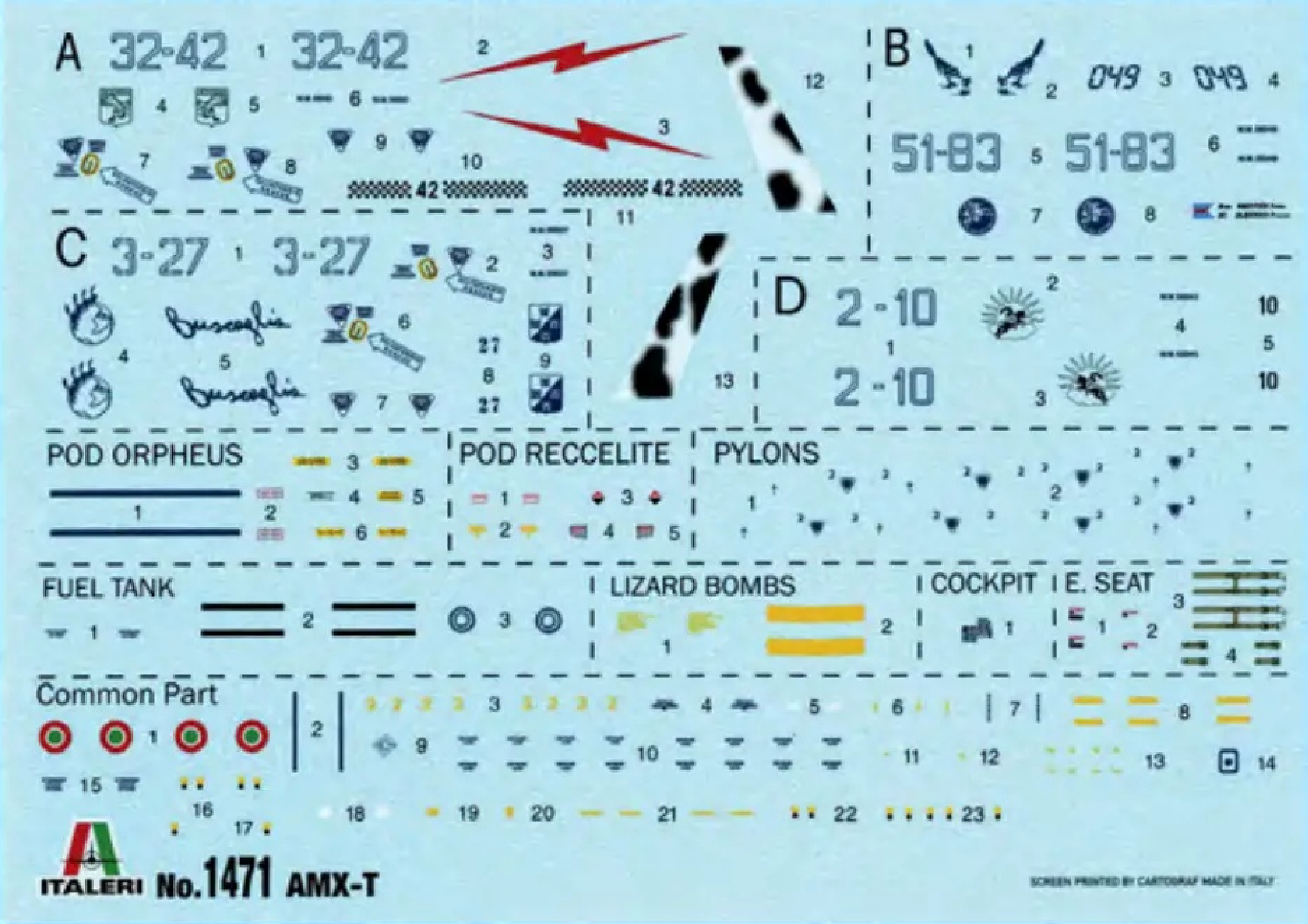


▲ Italeri incorporated distinct mounting points within the model (marked in red here), making assembly straightforward and the fit near perfect.

KIT COLOUR SCHEMES

Italeri supplies markings for four airframes:

- MM 56051/32-42, 101° Gruppo OCU, 32° Stormo, Amendola AB, June 2006
- MM 55037/3-27, 132° Gruppo, 3° Stormo, as seen at Kleine-Brogel AB, Belgium, 1998
- MM 55049/51-83, 132° Gruppo, 51° Stormo, Istrana AB, February 2020
- MM55045/2-10, 14° Gruppo, 2° Stormo, Rivolto AB, October 2001



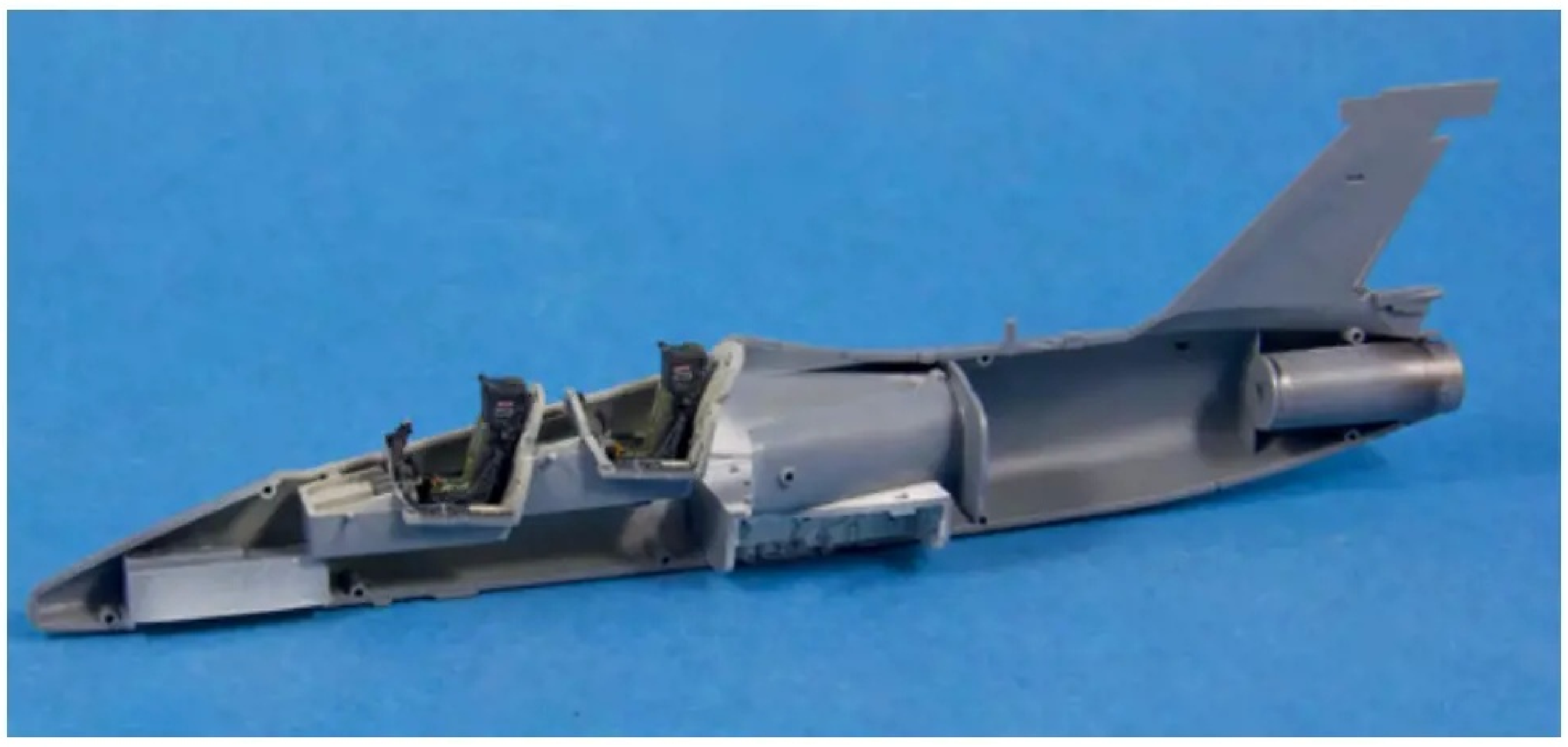
given a pin wash of Payne's Grey oil. NATO Black was appropriate to replicate the rubber of the tyres, this shade actually being a dark grey rather than pure black. With all the various parts finished, they were set aside to await installation near the end of the build.

The interior components fitted well between the fuselage halves thanks to clear and well-engineered mounting flanges. The parts essentially 'clicked' into place – another indication of Italeri's well-considered design. Despite this, the fuselage halves did not close perfectly, specifically across the forward spine. Adjusting to the edges of the interior parts, plus the use of a clamp while the glue set, was needed to achieve successful assembly. Interestingly, no nose weight was called for, and although the finished model did sit correctly (just barely), the addition of ballast is wise. After all, different underwing stores could change the model's centre of gravity.

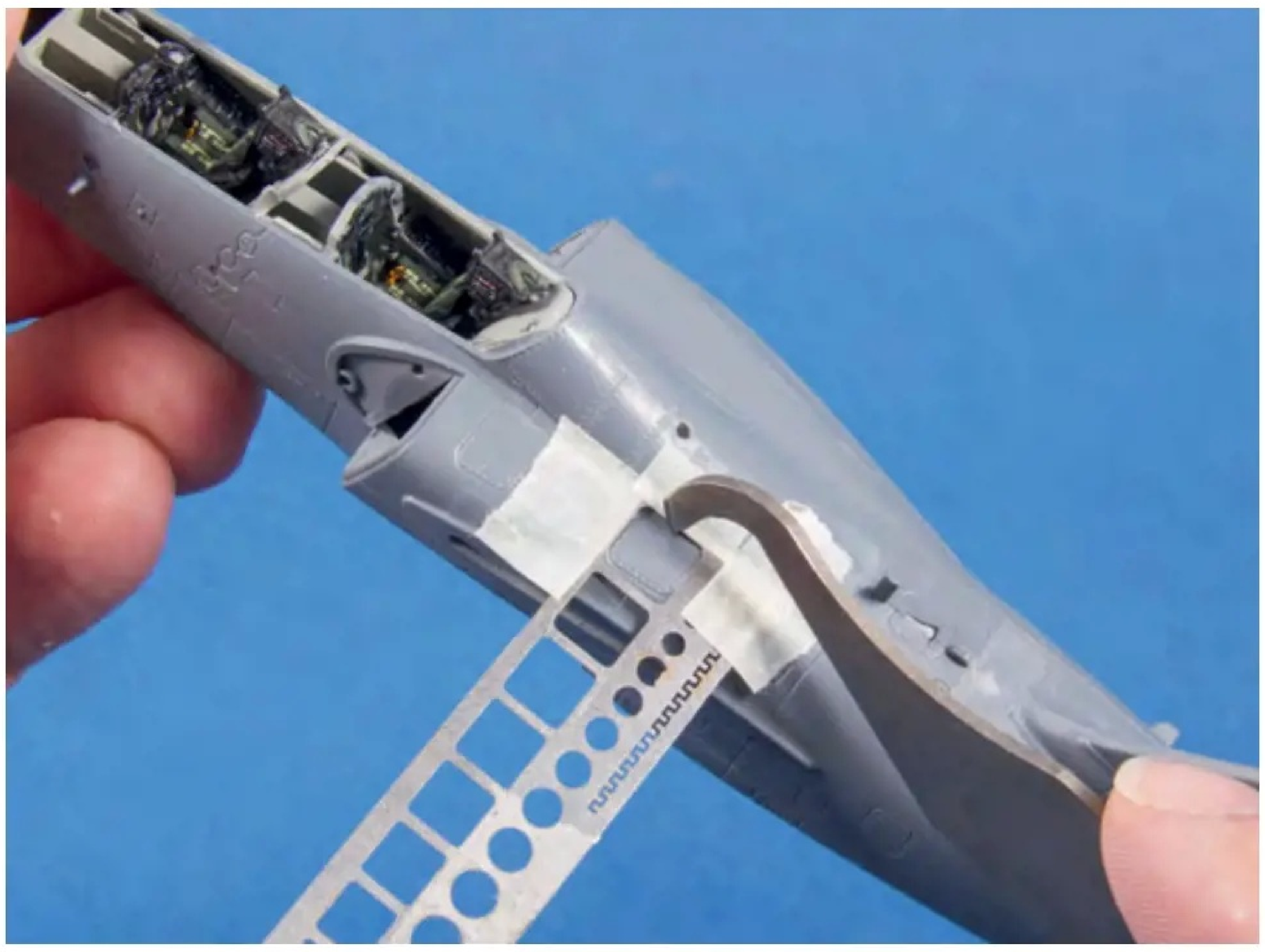
Tutto insieme

The twin-stick model shared several parts with the single-seat version… including a few flaws.

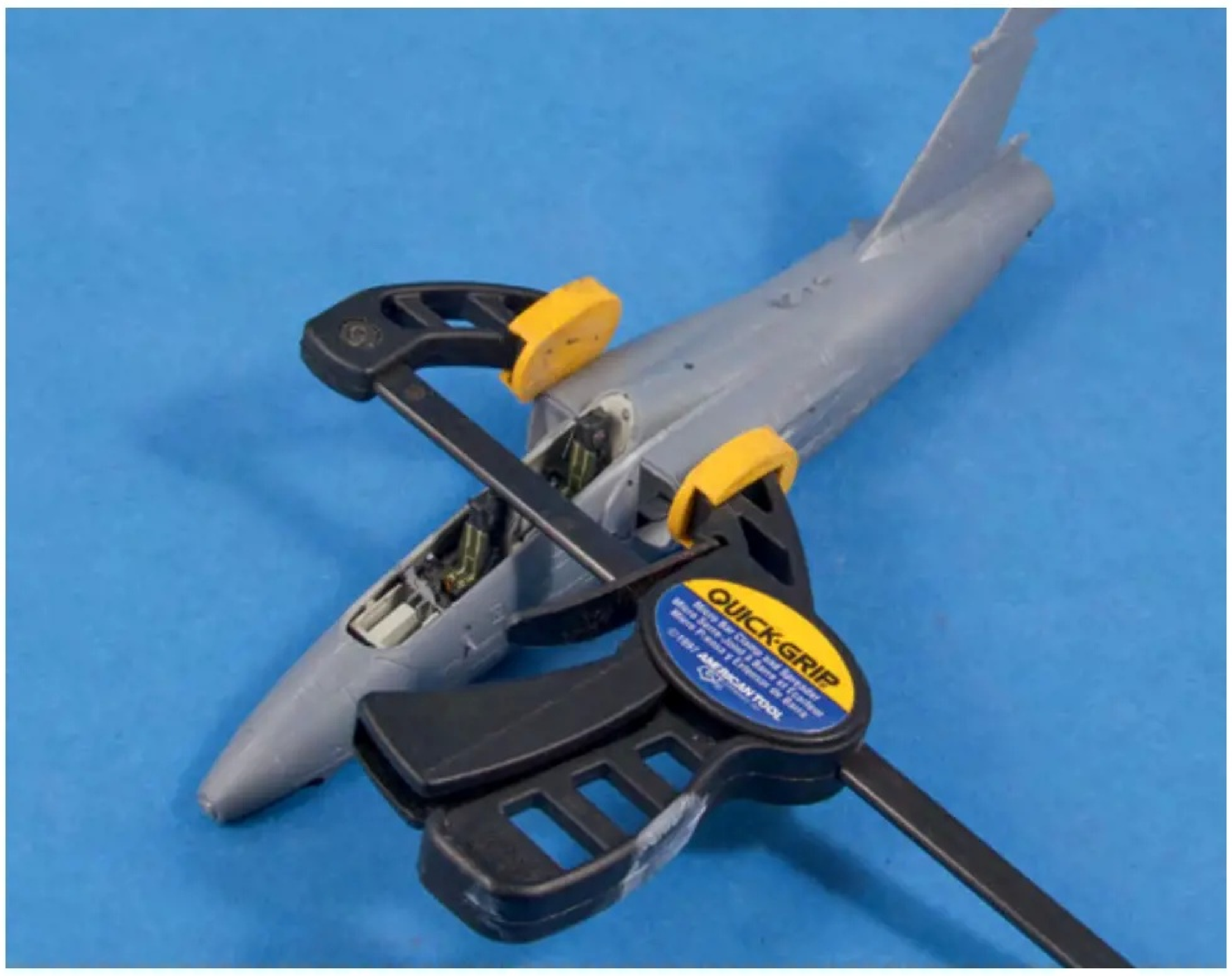
Six access panels above the intake, three on either side, were not engraved completely, with the edges nearest the centreline missing. This was the worst possible place to correct as it was on a compound curve with little working space. However, with a metal template and



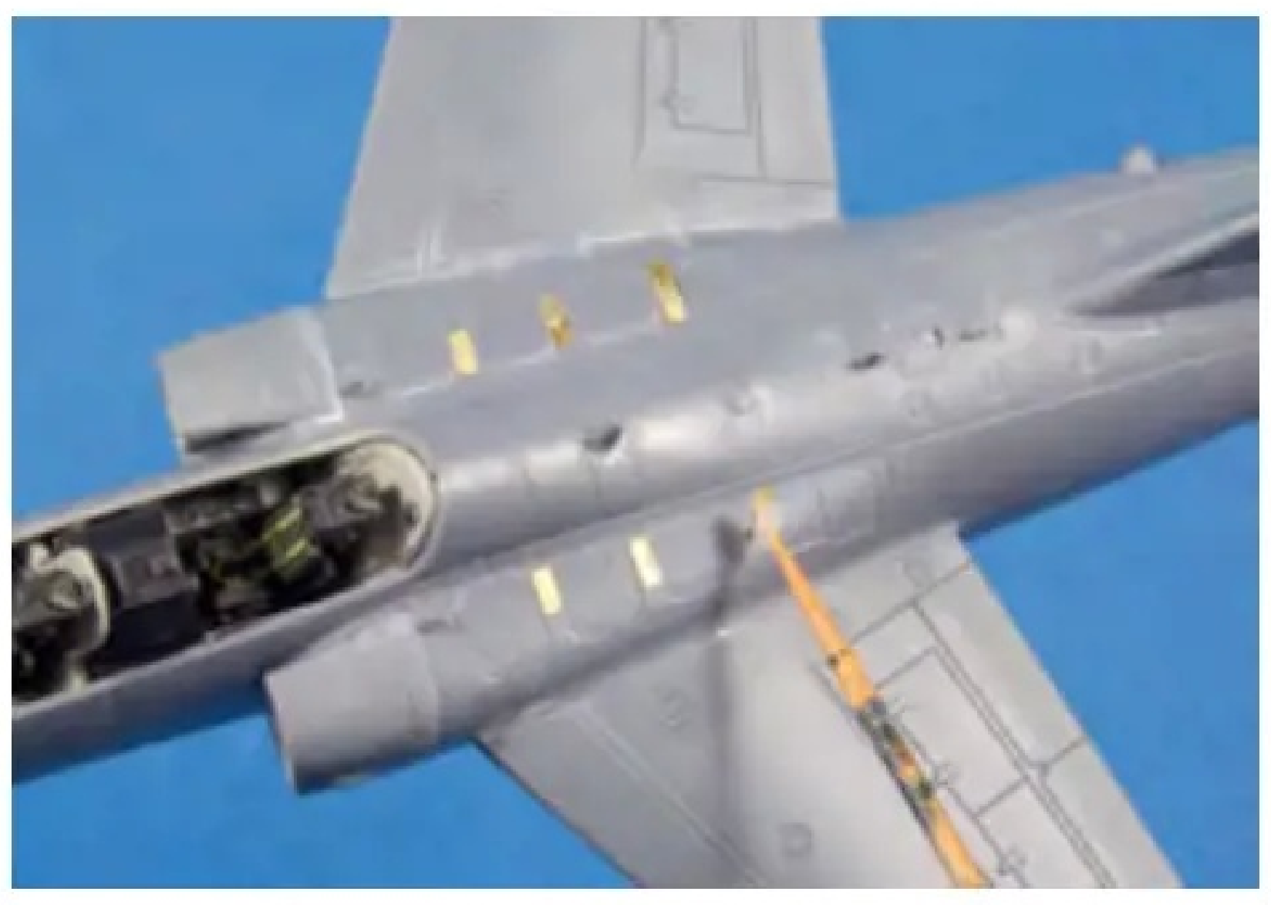
▲ The various interior components in position, awaiting fuselage closure. Nose weight was not called for by the instructions, but at least a small portion should be added, for which ample room is available.



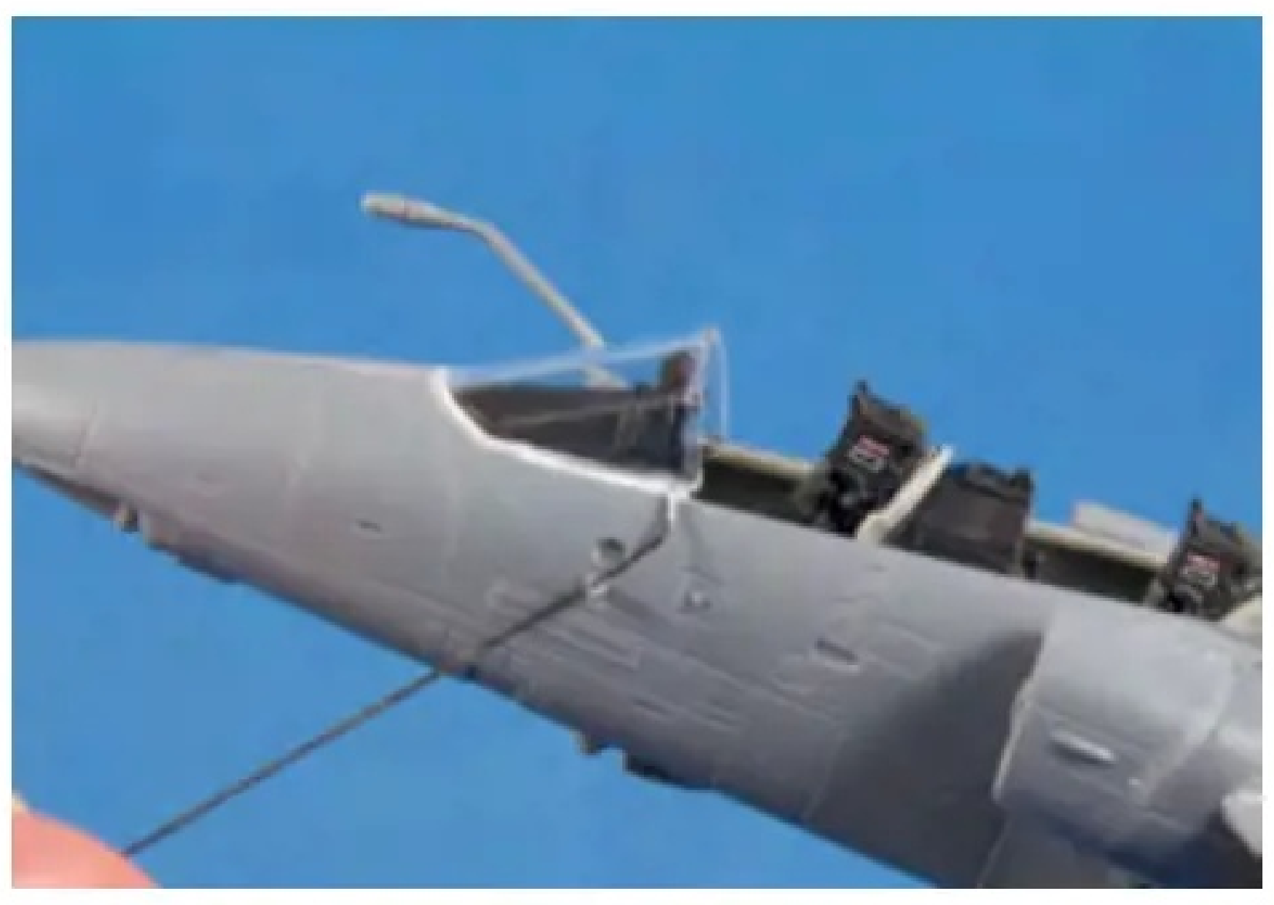
▲ As per the single-seat version, the access panels along the tops of the intake were not completely engraved. A scribing tool and a metal template were needed to correct this oversight.



▲ The fit of the interior was checked and adjusted multiple times, and yet the fuselage still would not close completely without the use of a clamp to hold it together while the glue cured.



▲ To attach the small, photo-etched airframe strengthening plates, a toothpick with a ball of dental wax on its tip was used as an applicator, while CA glue was the chosen adhesive.



▲ Fine wire was used to apply PVA glue to the windscreen edge; this filled the gaps between it and the fuselage. A damp cotton swab wiped away excess glue.

> **“Like its single-seat brother, the AMX-T came moulded on two runners of grey plastic”**

careful use of a scribing tool, the panel lines were added to an acceptable standard.

Mounting of the wings posed no problem; they just fit. The antennas, however, took thought; not how to install them but rather which to use. The instructions would have you install, or not install, certain aerials based on which airframe was being built, such as the ILS or lower ECM antennas. Studying photos of the actual aircraft contradicted these instructions. Since a picture is worth a thousand words, it was decided to complete the model based on reference images which, frankly, is always a good idea with most any modelling project.

Italeri supplied a small PE fret, which provided a number of fuselage re-enforcement plates (this would also have been a good place to include seatbelts.) Looking at the aforementioned photos, these plates were at times difficult to discern, and leaving them off the model probably would have gone unnoticed. After a spell of contemplation, it was decided that since the Italians were good enough to provide them, it only seemed right to put them to use. As to their overall worth, the jury is still out.

The one weak area of the kit was the canopy. Though clear and free of distortion, it did not fit too well. Meanwhile, the head-up display was too tall, resulting in just the slightest gap around the lower windscreen frame. More vexing was that both windscreen and canopy were narrower than the fuselage, resulting in an obvious step. The gap along the windscreen was addressed by filling it with PVA. As for the canopy, the easiest way to deal with the size discrepancy was to mount it open. In the meantime, however, it was masked and tacked closed so painting could commence.

Grigio volante

The instructions called for the airframe to be painted Dark

▲ The model ready for paint. Its canopy was positioned temporarily with spots of PVA, then masked using Bare Metal Foil and liquid mask.

▲ As no off-the-shelf match for the recommended FS 36280 was readily available, Tamiya XF-19 was deemed a suitable alternative. It also looks more accurate in this scale... at least to my eye.

▲ The base Sky Grey was lightened and sprayed randomly to simulate fading of the paint. The black exercise markings were kept untouched in keeping with their temporary nature.

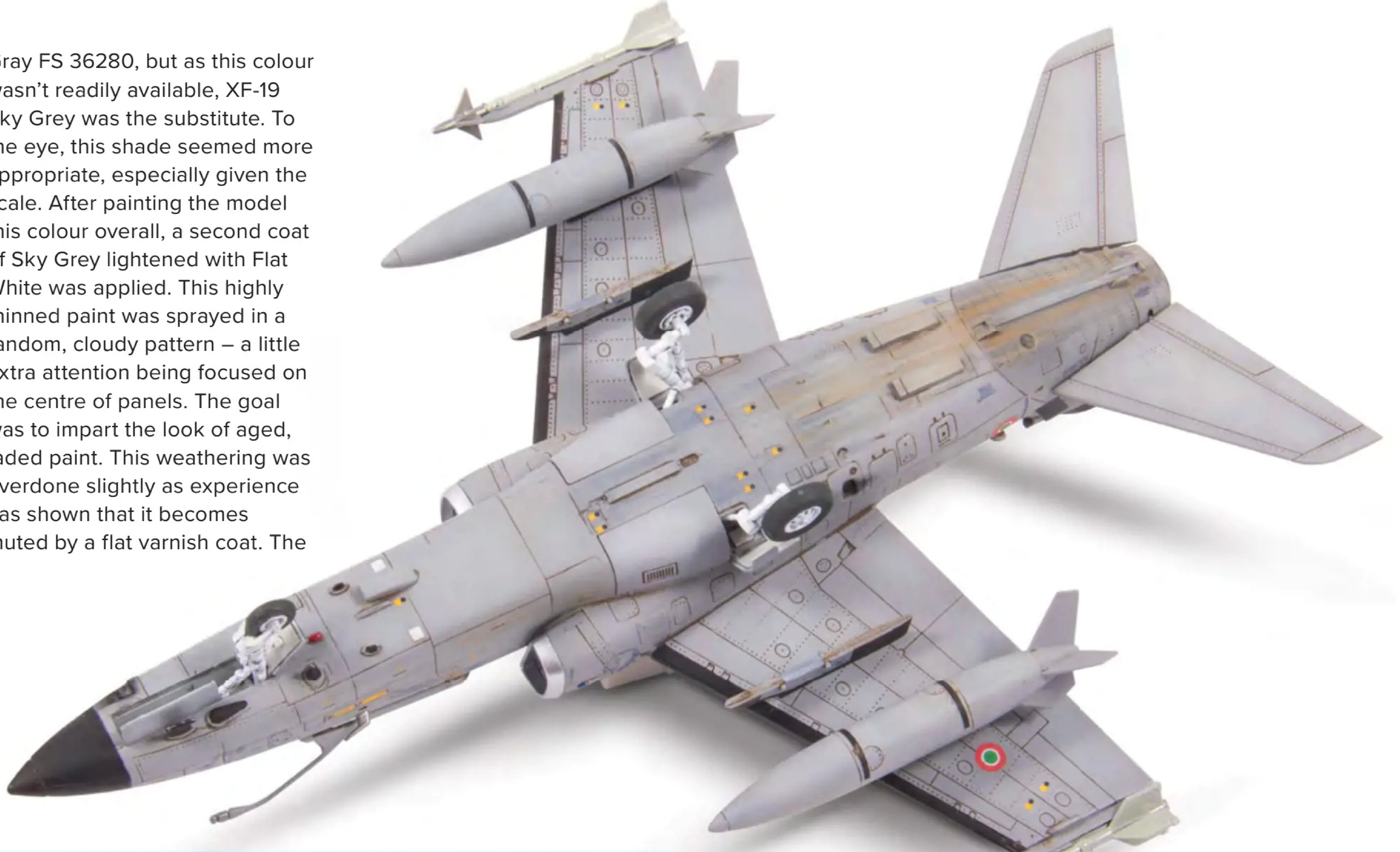
A 32-42 32-42
B
51-03
C 3-27 3-27
D 2-10 2-10
POD RECCELITE
PYLONS
POD ORPHEUS
LIZARD BOMBS
FUEL TANK

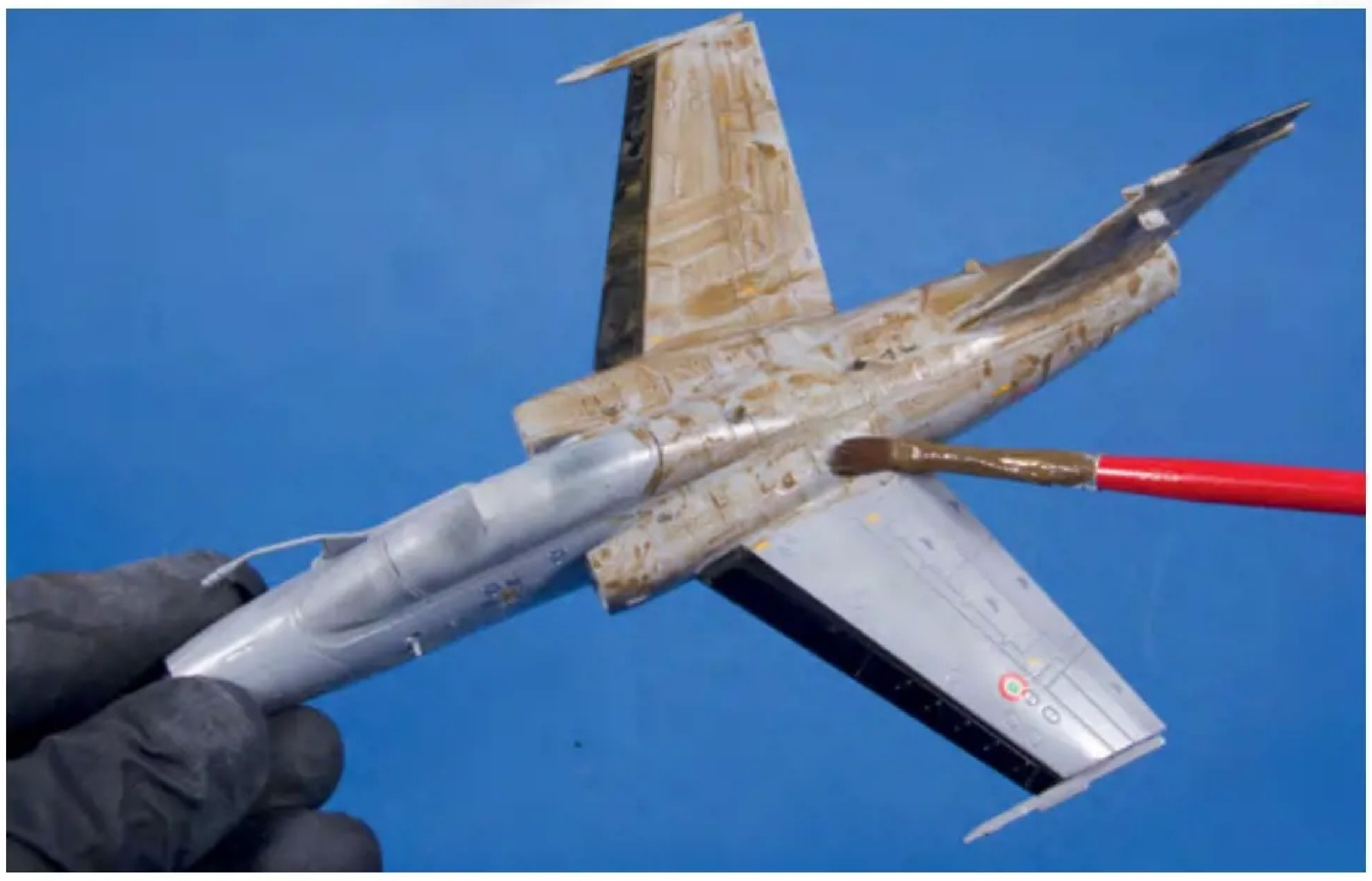
▲ Considering the model’s size, there were a fair number of decals to apply. These were well printed and easy to use. After application and a day to set, they were sealed by a gloss coat.

Gray FS 36280, but as this colour wasn't readily available, XF-19 Sky Grey was the substitute. To the eye, this shade seemed more appropriate, especially given the scale. After painting the model this colour overall, a second coat of Sky Grey lightened with Flat White was applied. This highly thinned paint was sprayed in a random, cloudy pattern – a little extra attention being focused on the centre of panels. The goal was to impart the look of aged, faded paint. This weathering was overdone slightly as experience has shown that it becomes muted by a flat varnish coat. The black areas of the airframe were kept more pristine and unfaded, being exercise markings.

The Cartograf decal sheet was comprehensive, providing markings for four aircraft plus all the generic stencils, of which there were many. Applied over two layers of Aqua Gloss, they performed perfectly and were easy to use, while the carrier film seemed to almost disappear. The vibrant colours of the decals, such as the roundels and yellow markings, contrasted too much with the faded look of the airframe. This would be dealt with later, but in the meantime, they were sealed under another layer of gloss.

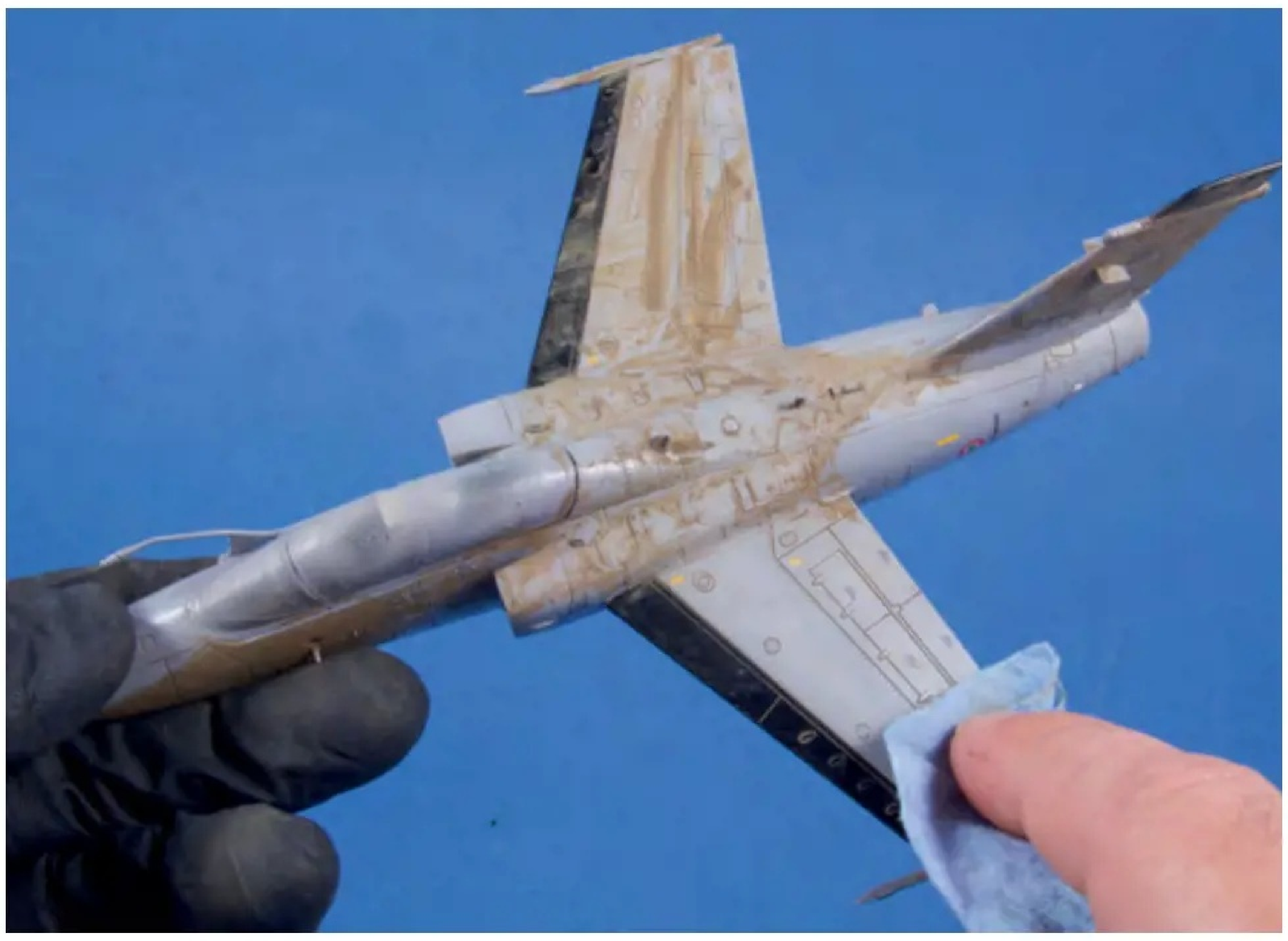
More weathering was added by first applying an overall wash of



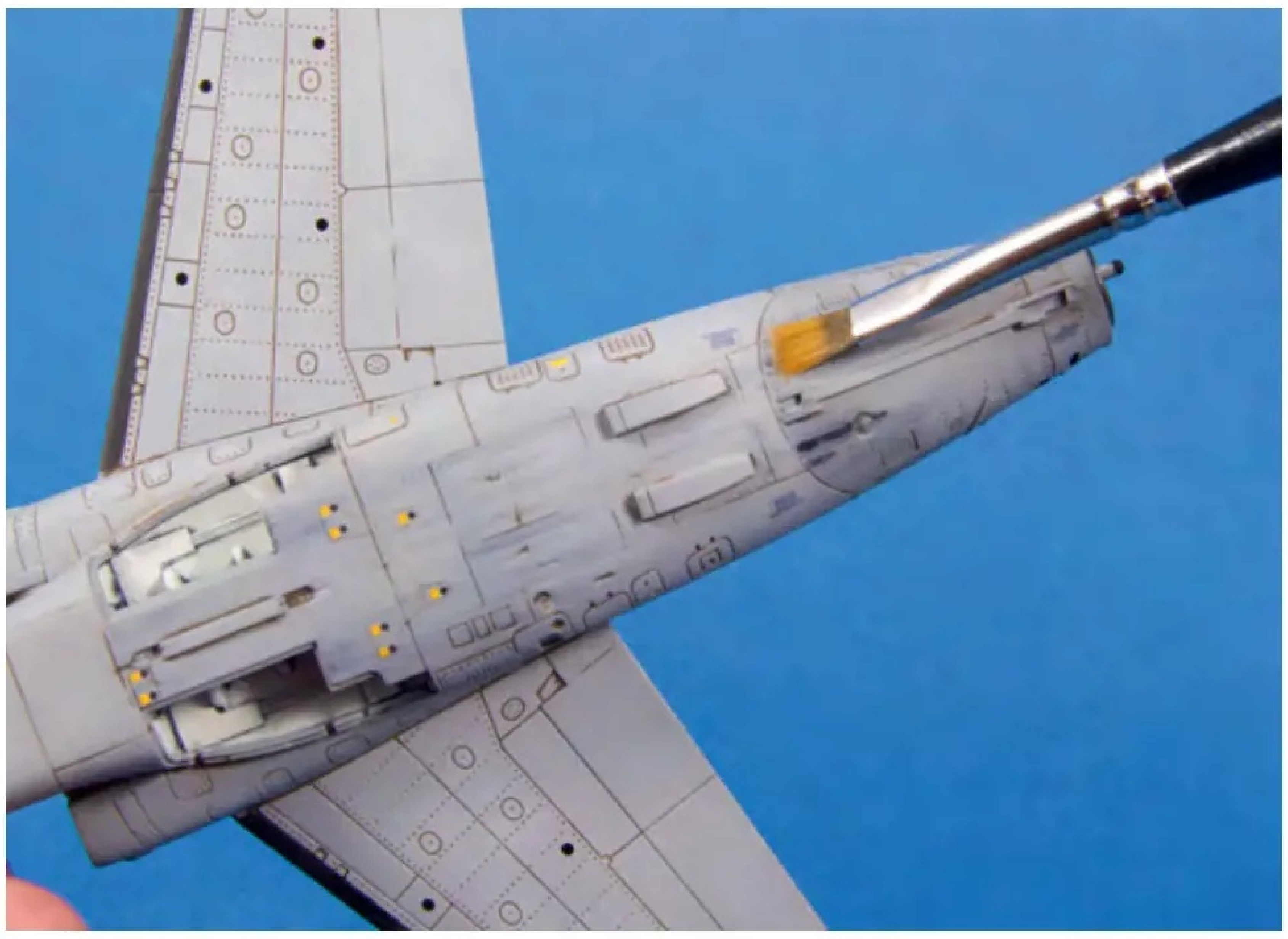


▲ Flory Models Grime wash was applied liberally over the whole model with an old brush, the water-based product finding its way easily into the engraved details.

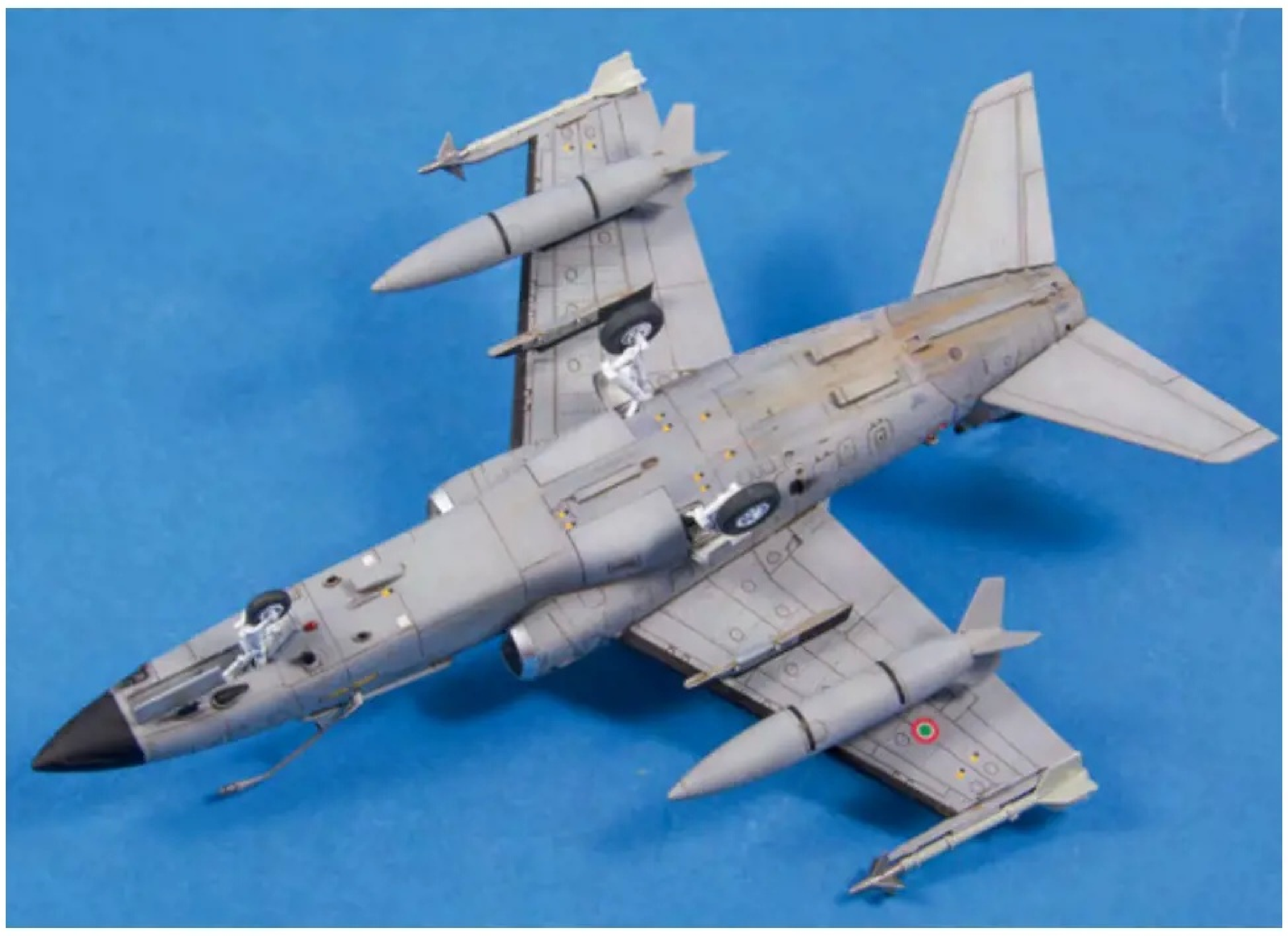
▲ The flat coat seemed to reactivate the wash, making it slightly darker. A second flat layer, this time tinted with a hint of grey, muted the overly bright decals and added more contrast.



▲ Once dry, which didn't take long, excess wash was cleaned using a slightly damp cloth – while a cotton swab was employed for hard-to-reach tight spots.



▲ **Fluid streaks were replicated via Payne's Grey and Burnt Sienna oil paints. After applying spots of paint to the fuselage, they were dragged rearwards with a wide brush dampened in turpenoid.**



▲ **The underside of the model loaded and dirtied. Along with drop tanks and missiles, the kit came supplied with two laser-guided bombs, a Litening targeting pod and Orpheus reconnaissance pod.**

Flory Models Grime. This product dried relatively quickly, thus the airframe was wiped with a slightly damp cloth to remove the excess. As it was water based, it cleaned away easily, but could also be reapplied if needed. The application of a flat coat reactivated the wash somewhat, making it a little darker, which worked to enhance the model's appearance. A second matt coat, this time tinted grey, was used to reduce the overall brightness of the decals, plus add more contrast and fading to the base grey airframe.

After brush-painting some of the small details such as navigation lights and various aerials, streaking was applied to the underside via more Payne's Grey and Burnt Sienna oils. Dots of paint were applied where fluids might leak and were drawn rearward with a flat brush, dampened with odourless thinner, in this case turpenoid. These streaks were built slowly so as to avoid overdoing the effect. Using a dot filter technique, additional stains were rendered around hatches and panels that would have been opened/closed often by ground personnel. Being oils, they dried slowly, which allowed time to blend them – but afterwards they needed a least a day to cure fully.

Piccoli pezzi

With the airframe complete, all that remained to attach were the small, protruding items. The landing gear parts clicked into place positively, cyanoacrylate (CA) glue being used to secure them permanently. This adhesive was also used on the tail horizontal stabilisers, intakes, missiles, drop tanks and air-data probes. Much to my surprise, the inflight refuelling probe, which

▶

"Interior components fitted well between the fuselage halves"

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

Tamiya (www.hobbyco.net)
X-2 Gloss White
XF-1 Flat Black
XF-2 Flat White
XF-19 Sky Grey
XF-69 NATO Black

Alclad (www.alclad2.com)
ALC-101 Aluminum
ALC-104 Dark Aluminum
ALC-111 Magnesium
ALC-112 Steel
ALC-121 Burnt Iron
ALC-600 Aqua Gloss Clear

Model Master (No longer available)
Flat Gull Grey
Light Grey
Insignia White

Flory Model (www.florymodels.org)
Grime wash

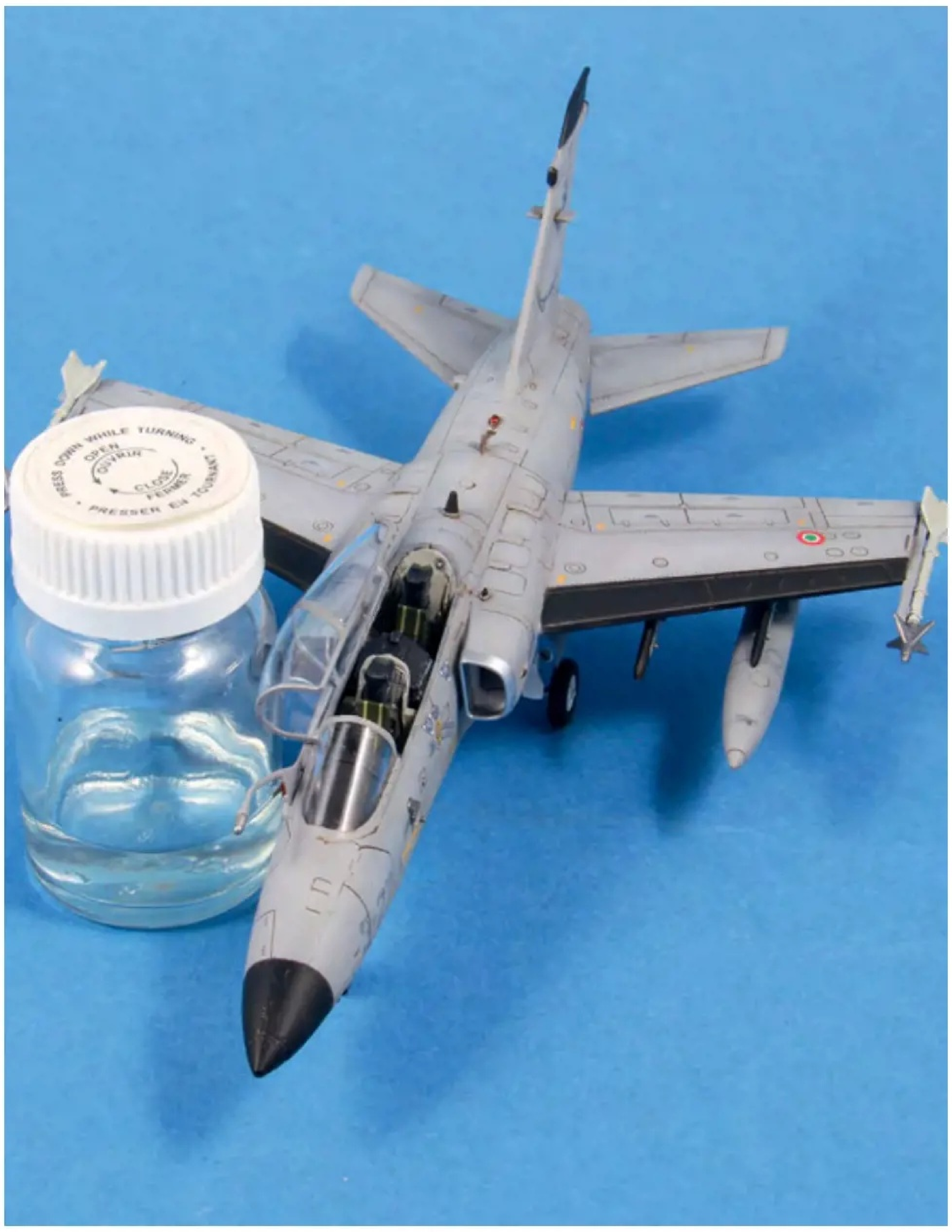
Winsor & Newton (www.winsornewton.com)
Payne's Grey
Burnt Sienna

was attached early in the build, survived without being damaged.

Again, however, the weak area was the canopy. Showing it open would conceal the fact that it did not fit perfectly, but no corresponding hardware was provided. To mount it open, it was placed on its edge over a bead of PVA and propped up while the glue dried. Using this glue instead of CA allowed for more adjustment time, while preventing fogging from any fumes.

Veni, Vedi, Vinci

This was a thoroughly enjoyable build, there is no doubt. True, the canopy could have been better, and although not a tail-sitter, a hint of nose weight would not hurt. The fit of the parts, however, was generally excellent, meaning a straightforward build, while the quality of the moulding was top notch. And it is hard to over-compliment the Cartograf decals. This is a fine model, worthy of being built several times. Even though the real aircraft is in the twilight of its career, it is gratifying to finally have first-rate models of the AMX.


▲ No hardware was supplied by Italeri to mount the canopy in the open position; it simply rested along the cockpit sill. A paint jar was used to support the canopy while the glue dried.

> **"The fit of the parts, however, was generally excellent, meaning a straightforward build"**

3-27
27
Buscaglia

MIG-19P

1:72
CP72056

0744
CARLOS ALONSO 2025

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sales@clearpropmodels.com
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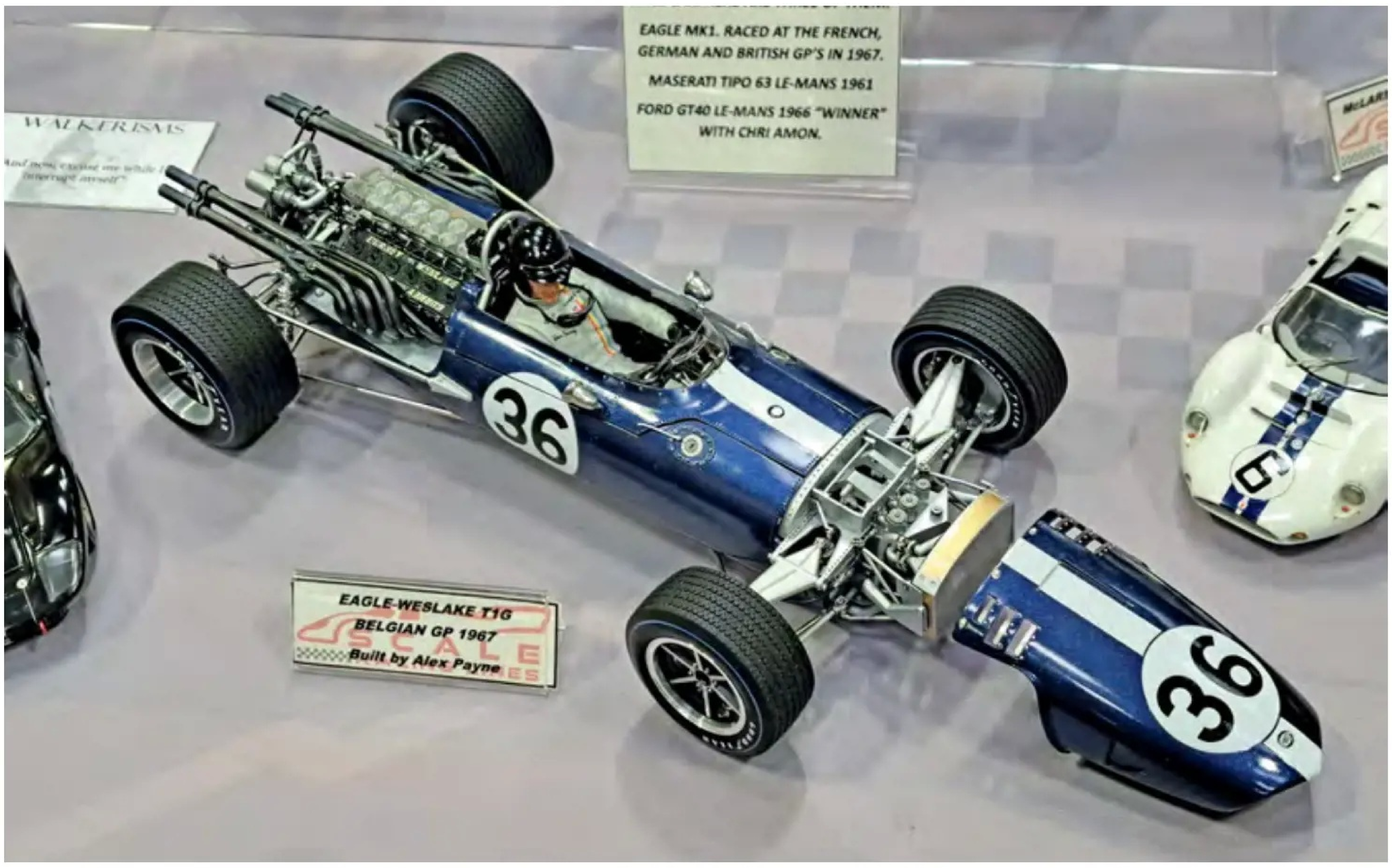
scale models and accessories

MIG-19PM

1:72
CP72019

905
CARLOS ALONSO 2024

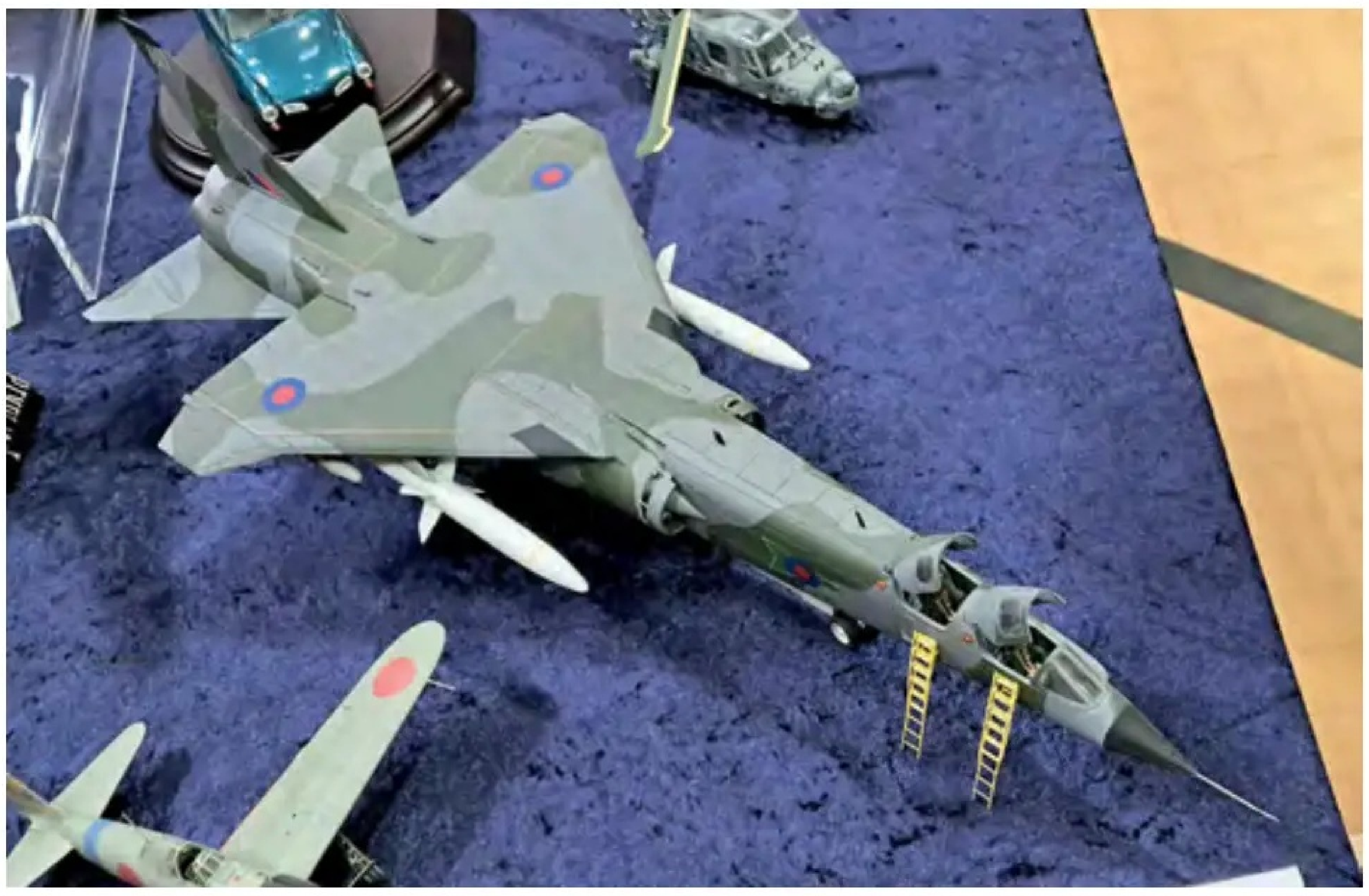

EAGLE MK1. RACED AT THE FRENCH, GERMAN AND BRITISH GP'S IN 1967.
MASERATI TIPO 63 LE-MANS 1961
FORD GT40 LE-MANS 1966 "WINNER" WITH CHRI AMON.
EAGLE-WESLAKE T1G
BELGIAN GP 1967
Built by Alex Payne
36

◀ This magnificent 1/20 Eagle-Weslake T1G was built by Scale Racing Lines' Alex Payne, using the Model Factory Hiro kit, which includes markings for this 1967 Belgian Grand Prix machine.

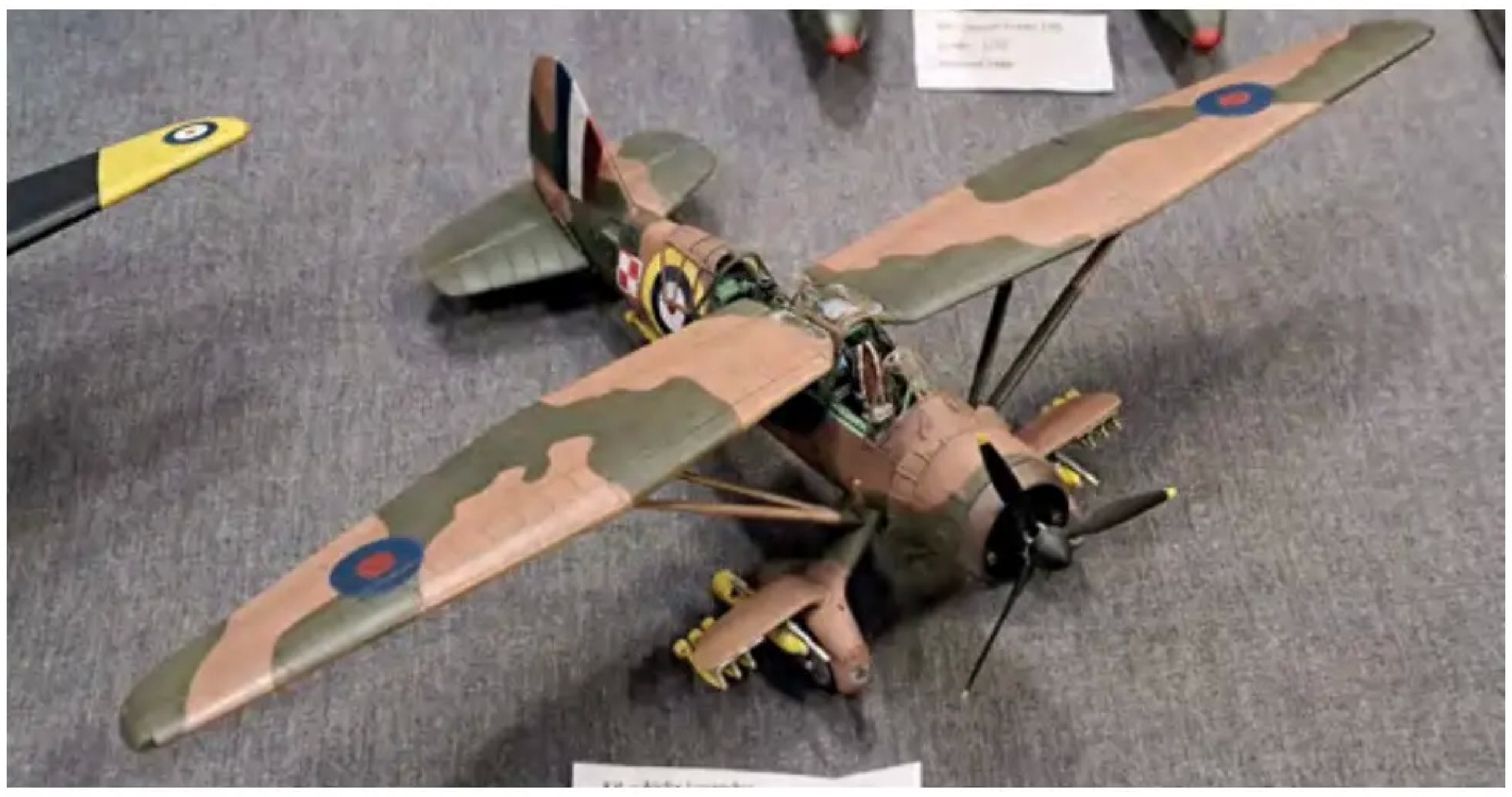
WELLAND WONDERS

This year's Peterborough Model Club Show was the second at the Stamford Welland Academy, and anticipation was high following 2024's successful event. There was a busy flow of visitors soon browsing the displays, with lessons learned from last year being applied well – almost all bottlenecks removed – and the only remaining spot being the college's own narrow corridor to the sports hall. Table layout was also improved, with an equal division of traders between the three main halls to accompany the many club and special interest group (SIG) displays.

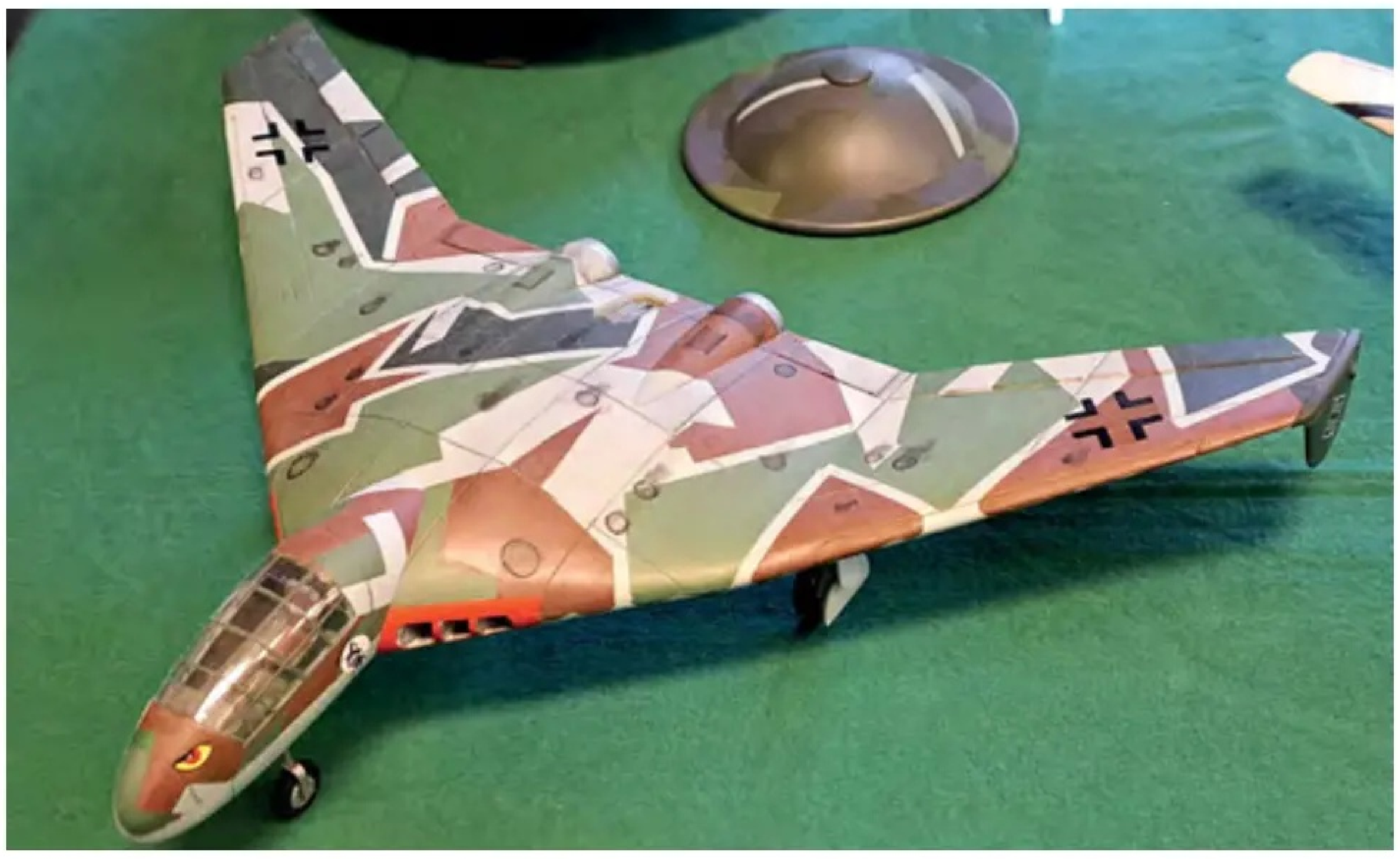
The tombola proved hugely popular, so much so that all prizes had been won and collected by



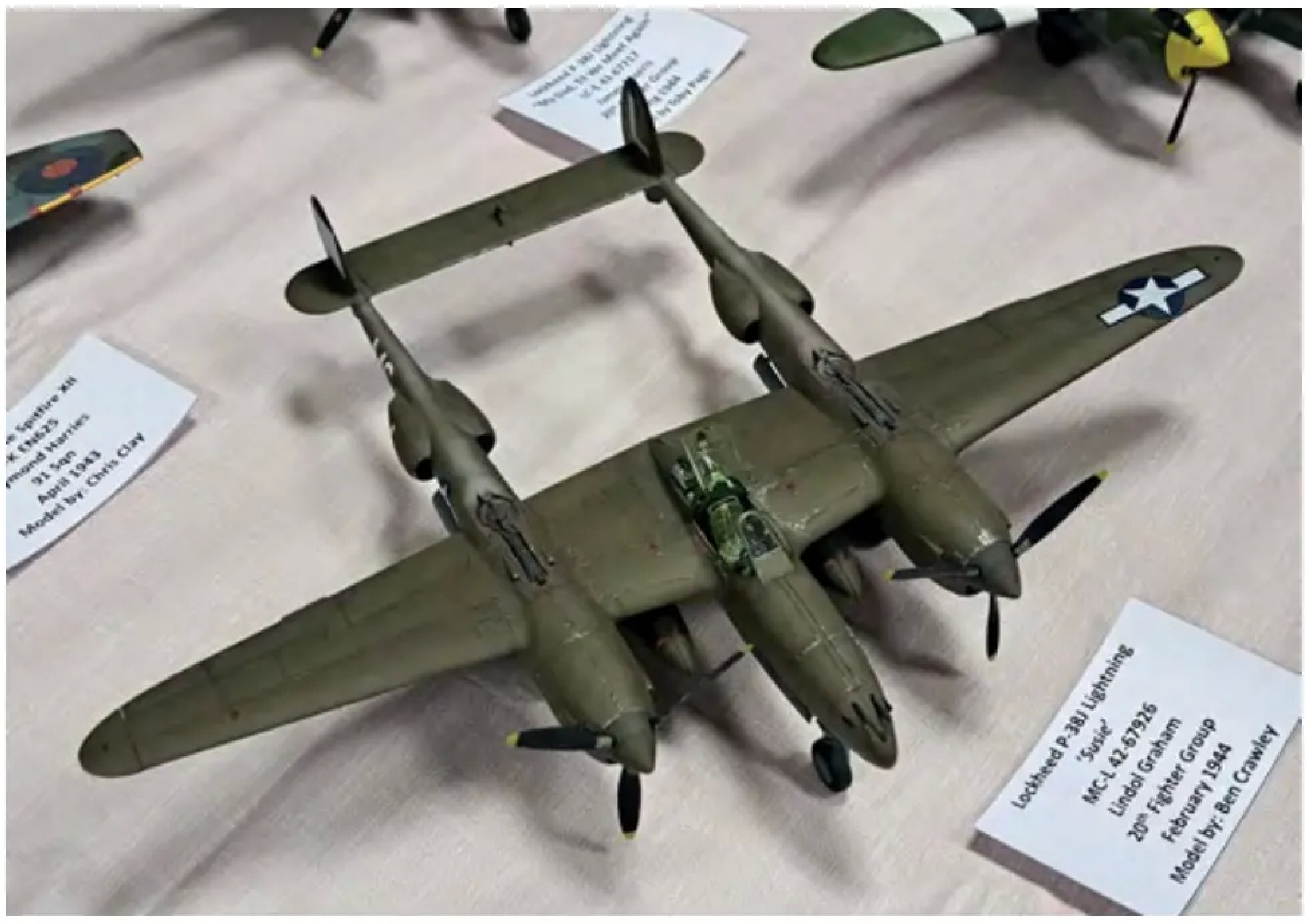
▲ Airfix's TSR.2 kits arguably sparked one of the biggest 'what-if' considerations, given the type's brief existence, with IPMS Lincoln's Paul Carter completing his 1/48 kit as a Blue Water tactical nuke-equipped 9(B) Squadron airframe.



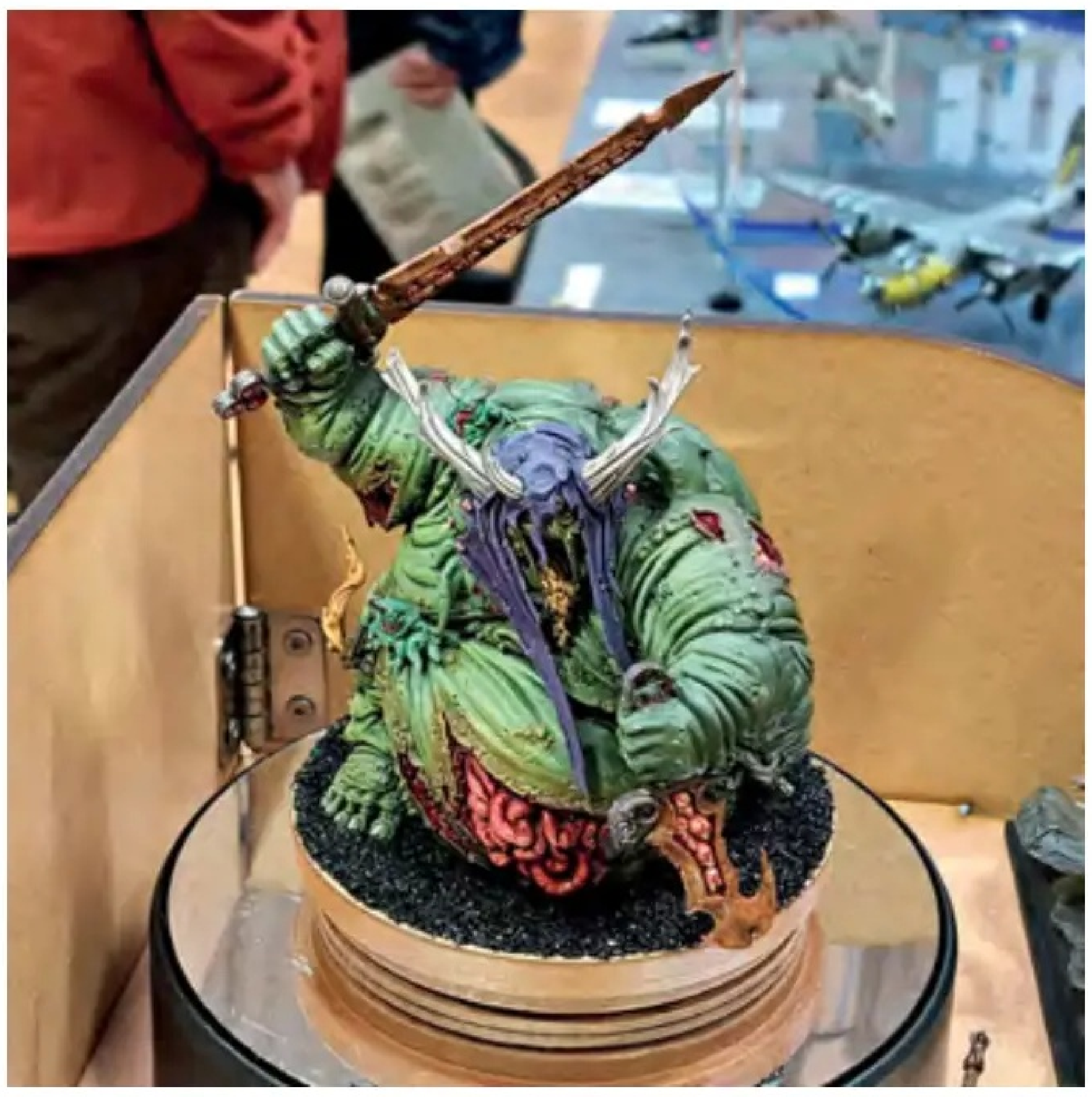
▲ Of the several Airfix 1/48 Westland Lysanders present at the show, Richard Page's 309 (Polish) Squadron build stood out; this was one of several excellent aircraft models on the Bedford + District table.



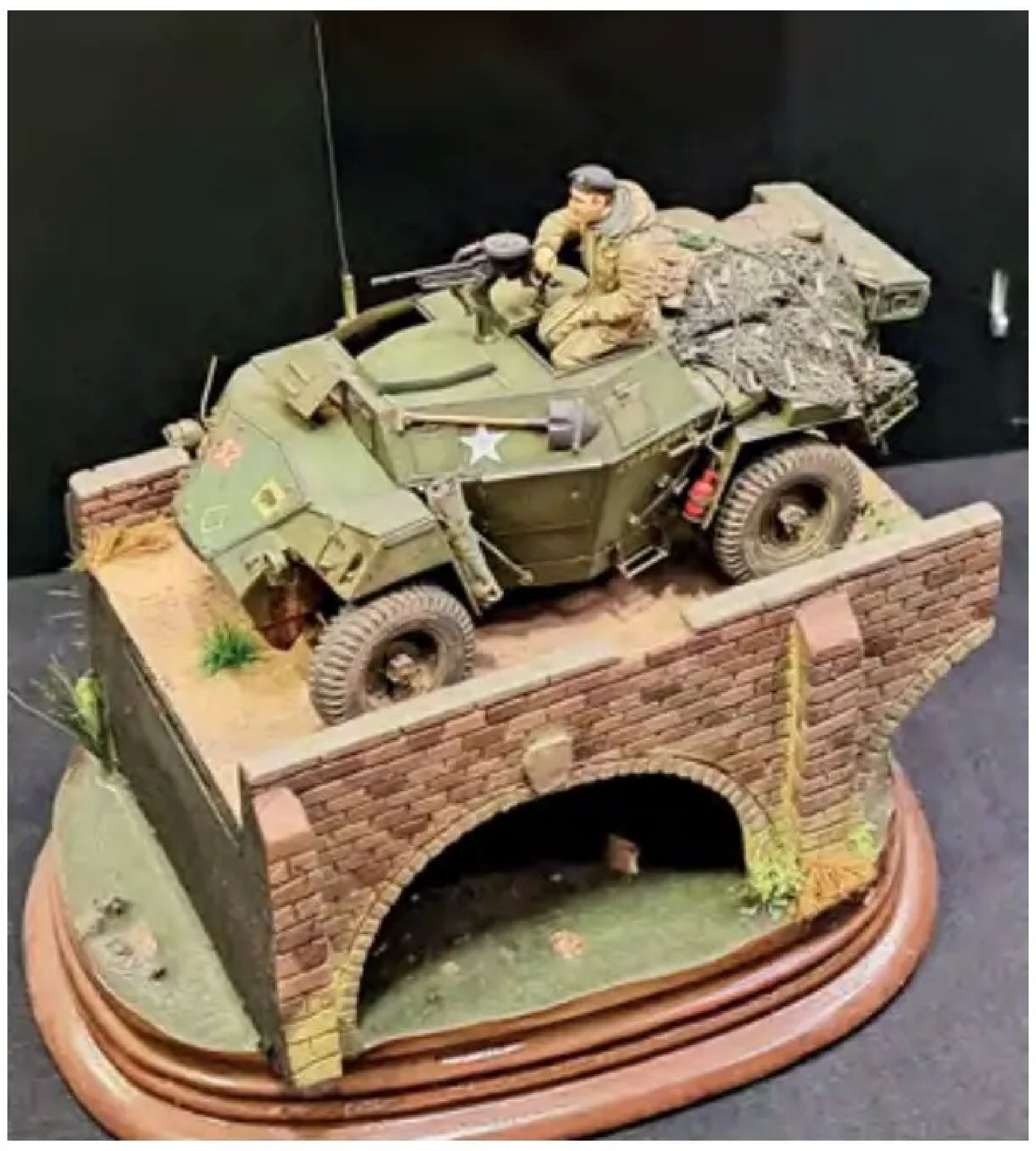
▲ The What-if SIG can always be relied on to produce something unusual, and this Amusing Hobby 1/48 Focke-Wulf Fw 100 schnellbomber by Richard Brooker drew plenty of attention, in part due to its striking camouflage.


Lockheed P-38J Lightning
'Susie'
MC 42-67926
Lindol Graham
20th Fighter Group
February 1944
Model by: Ben Crawley

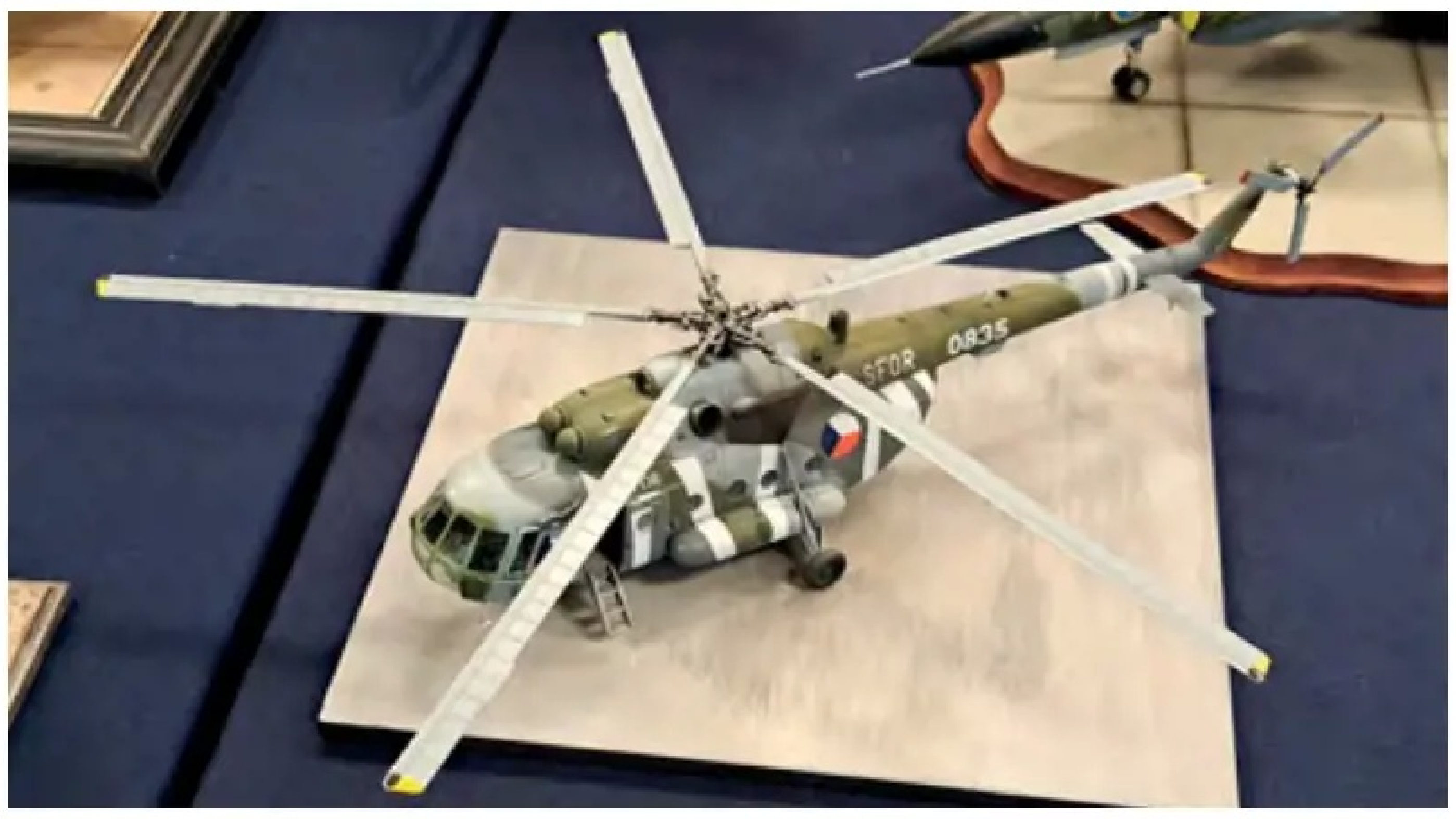
▲ The Kings Cliffe Airfield Museum put on a fabulous display, with builds by many modellers charting the history of the airfield, plus the units that served there. Ben Crawley built this Tamiya 1/48 P-38J Lightning as *Susie*, a 20th Fighter Group airframe.



▲ Letchworth modeller Andy Kurland gave his Warhammer Chaos Daemon 'The Great Unclean One' a superb painted finish, using acrylics throughout.



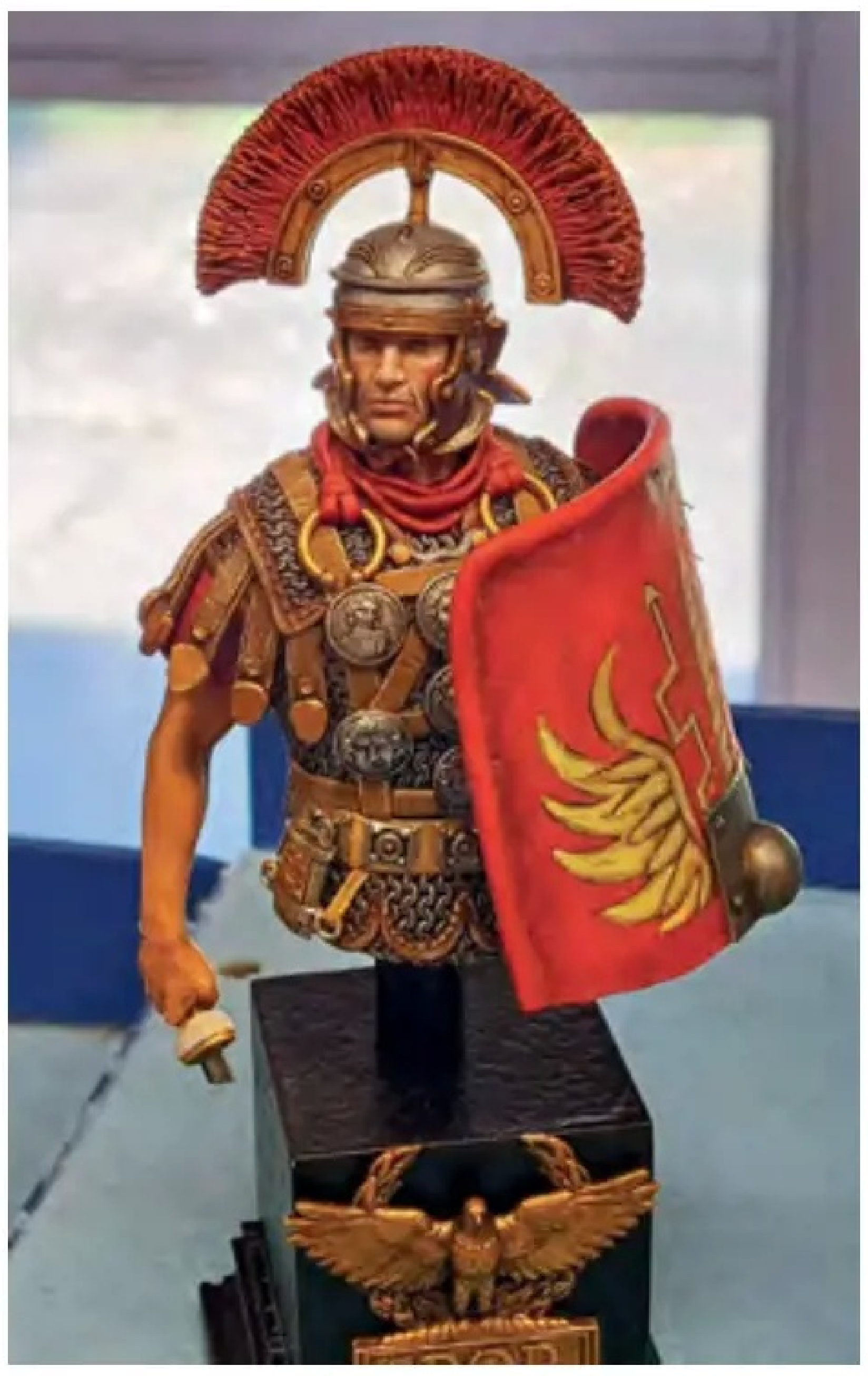
▲ Bronco's 1/35 Humber MK.I was built by IPMS Fenland & Spalding modeller Paul Scott, who then scratch-built the bridge section as a base.



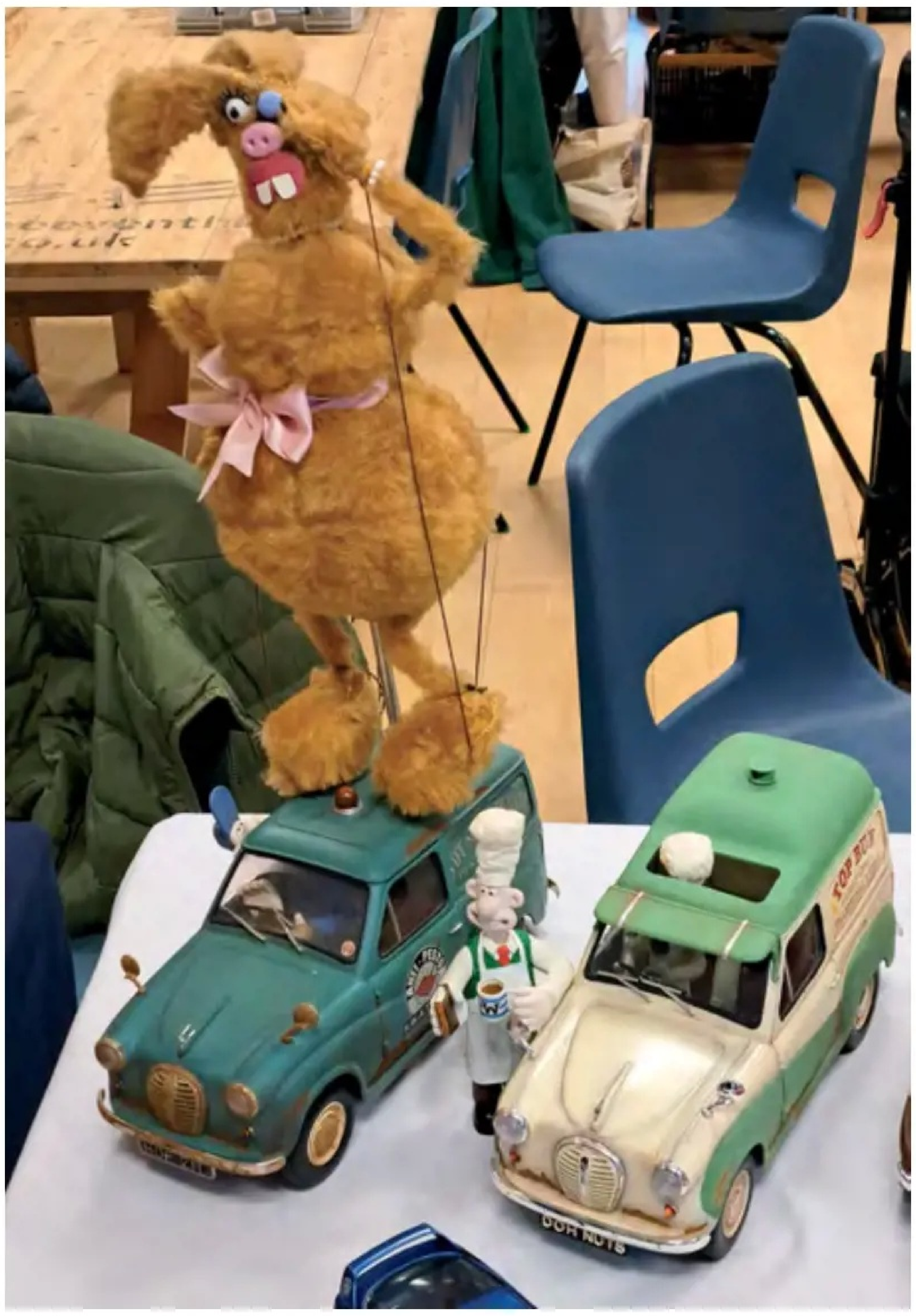
◀ Belvoir modeller Mark Beecham built this superb Czech-liveried Mi-8 *Hip* helicopter using the Hobby Boss kit.

11am, which has to be a first for a show. Regardless of whether your interest lay in aircraft, military, figures, auto, maritime or sci-fi/real space, there was something for everyone, with skill levels on show varying from complete beginners through to complex scratch-built models. Best of all, the discussions over how to achieve such projects were in full flow throughout the day and, to my mind, there was more than a few new adherents (or those returning after a long absence) to the hobby looking forward to their first build.

Stu Fone



▲ North Essex Model Club's Geoff Woods painted this El Greco 3D-printed 1/10 Roman Centurion with a mix of oils – primarily for the face – with acrylics for the remainder of the figure.



▲ If there was one model that caught most people's eye, it had to be Rich Middleton's *The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* Anti-Pesto van, which was built from the Airfix kit and benefited from homemade decals, plus of course a scratch-built bunny decoy!

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AV0018 Rust
AV0017 Dark Rust
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Fresh off the Boat

Myriad tiny parts from Takom were assembled by **Johan Augustsson** to build a 1/35 M29 Weasel as served in Normandy in July 1944

▲ Takom's PE details included wheel rims, windscreen wipers, handles and an exhaust cover, among other items.

USA
USA
40152658-S
40152658-S
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USA 40151727
2-38-I
2-38-I
TAKOM

▲ The decal sheet offered markings for four different M29s employed in the European Theatre.

Studebaker's M29 Weasel, which served during World War Two, was designed by British inventor Geoffrey Pyke. It met the need for a light vehicle capable of operating in snow, but which could also be employed in sandy, muddy, and desert terrain – including towing loads over land that other wheeled vehicles simply couldn't negotiate. The M29 had a front-engined, rear-wheel-drive system, 20in tracks and semi-amphibious capabilities suited for inland waterways. It served on a limited basis through surf in the Pacific Theatre and during the landings on Dutch Walcheren in Europe. More than 15,000 were built (all variants) including the M29C with float tanks, a recoilless rifle carrier and a flamethrower, and was used by the US Army and Marine Corps, as well as British, Canadian and French forces.

What's in the box?

Takom provides 321 pieces in grey styrene including a driver figure, three transparent components and a photo-etched (PE) brass fret with 46 parts. These are accompanied by full-colour instructions incorporating 16 stages and decals for four vehicles. The colour guide is designed by Mig Jimenez with his own AMMO paint colour references. Link-and-length tracks feature, but no extras such as a folded canvas top or jerrycans… not even personal equipment or a firearm for the driver.

Examination of the runners revealed outstanding detail, right down to the manufacturer's label on the tiny roadwheels – for anyone who can actually read it!

A notable issue already at this stage, though, was that no matter how small a part, it had at least two runner attachments, which demanded much careful cutting and sanding. Several reviews of the kit came to mind, which had highlighted poor fit, 'weird' styrene that didn't reacting well with ordinary plastic cement and so on. But nobody remembers a loser, so on with construction!

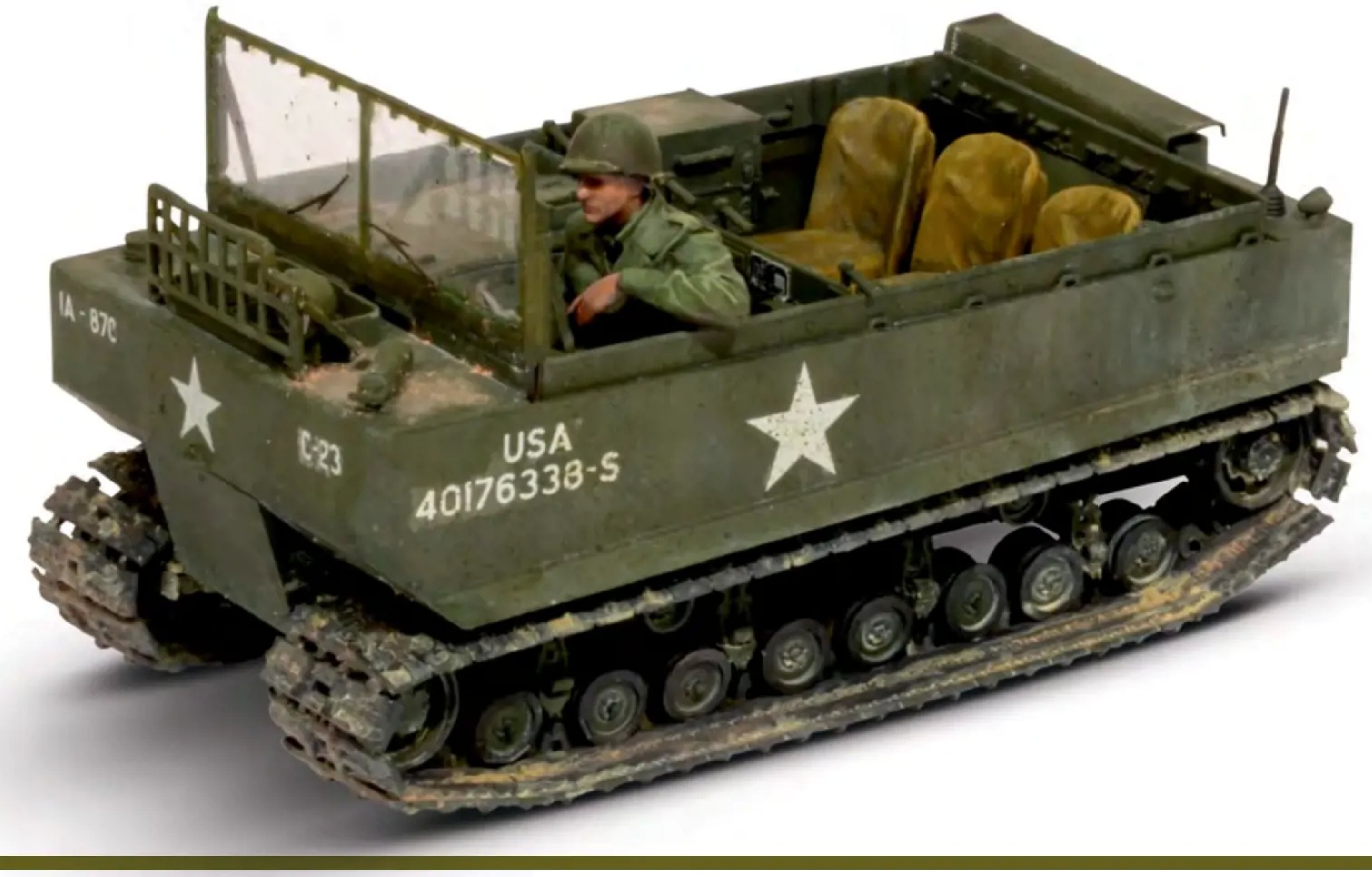
Initial assembly

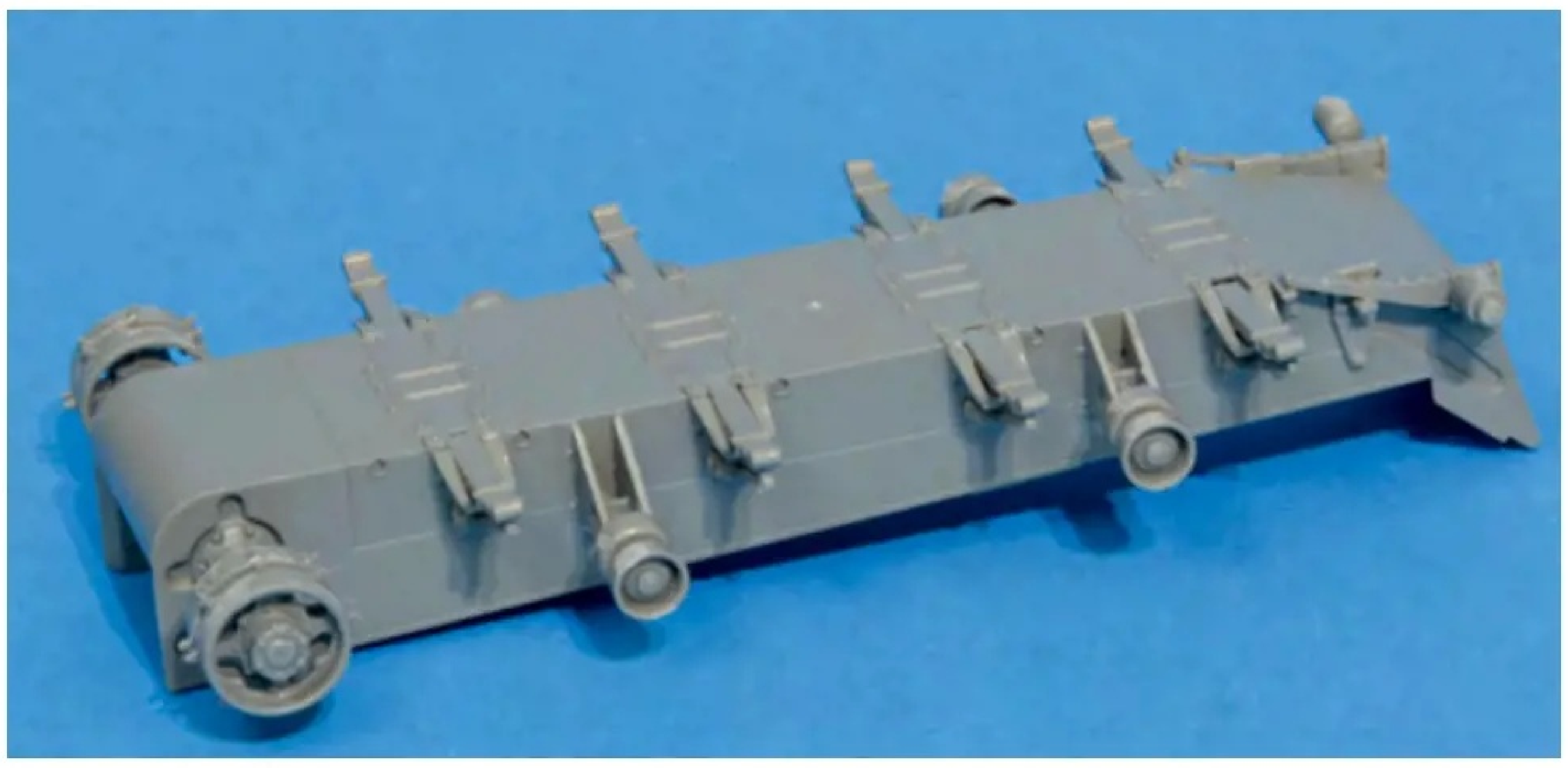
The first four construction stages involved the lower hull and running gear. It should be said that this was the most problematic section build-wise, because more than 100 parts are employed. Tiny components mean minimal contact surfaces for adhesive application and, as the instructions were slightly vague, the whole process could become stressful. Patience is a virtue here, but even with an overdose of it, assembly was challenging. I could not figure how the struts (A24) were located to the bogie assemblies, which meant the outer ends were cut. Next came eight bogies, four on each side with 11 parts each: eight wheels and three more pieces for the leaf-spring assembly. This resulted in spending two entire evenings to construct the running gear, not including the tracks,

MODEL SPEC

M29 Weasel
By: Takom
Stock code: 2167
Scale: 1/35
Price: £33.99
Available from:
www.bachmann.co.uk

M29 WEASEL
USA
TAKOM

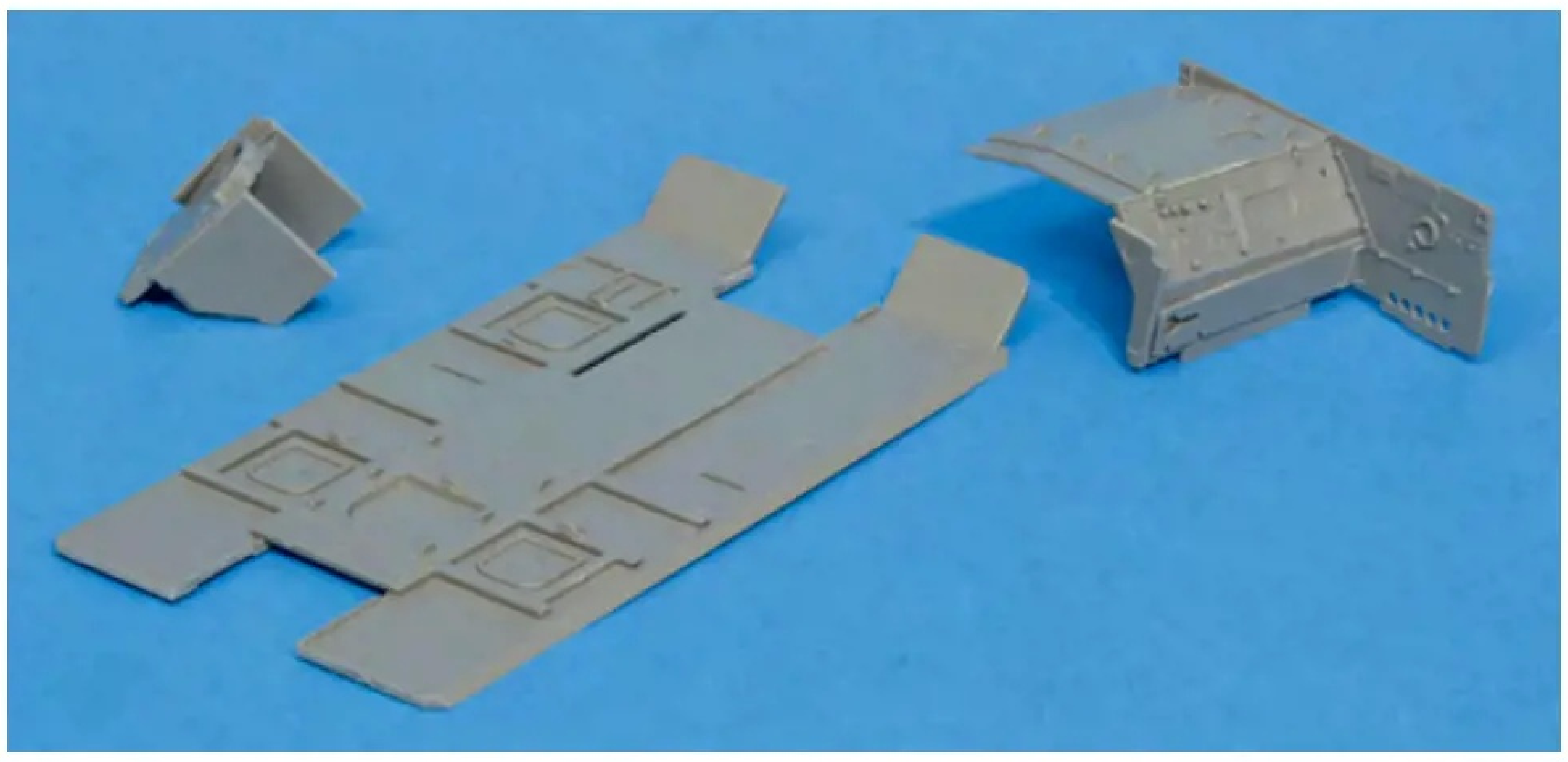


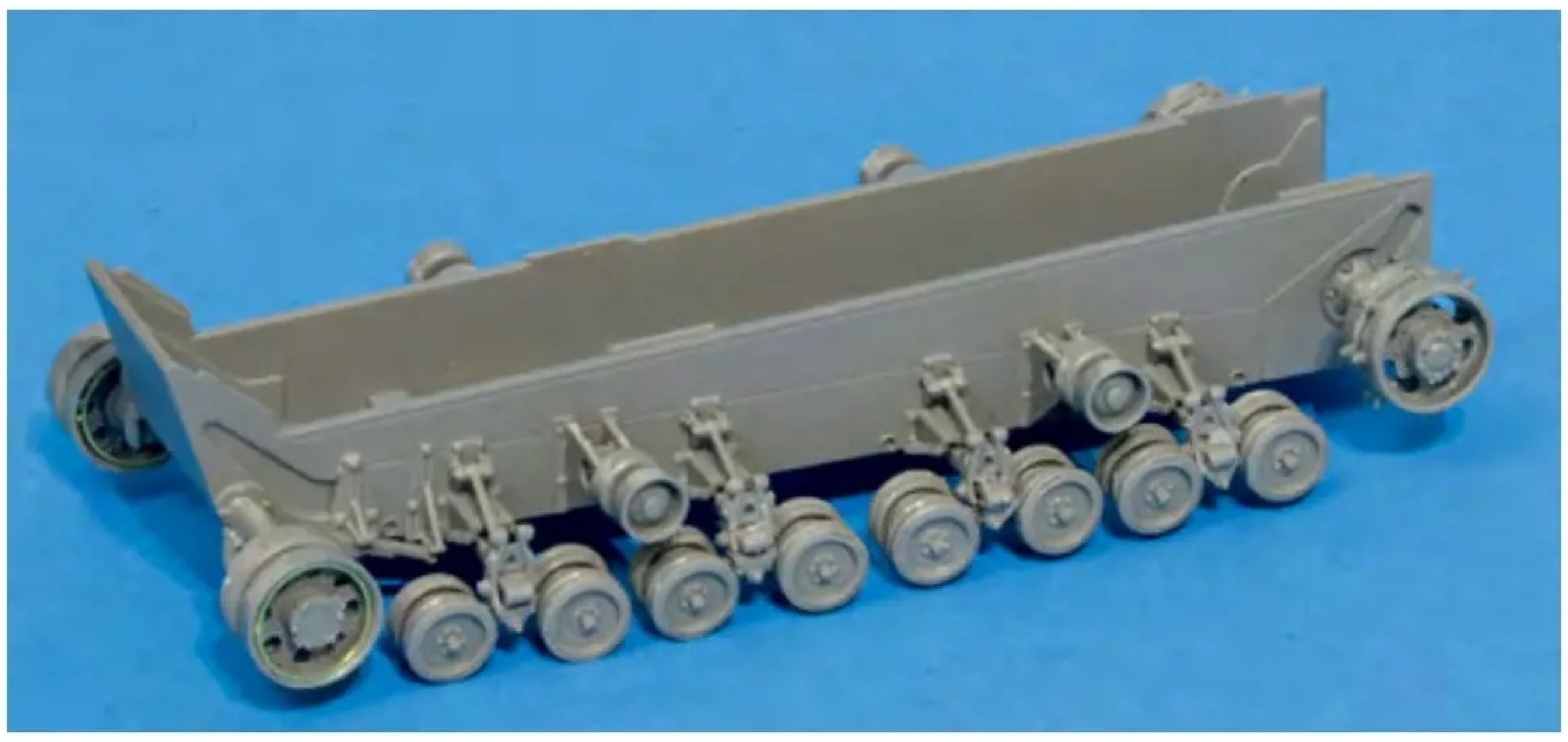


▲ Here, the drive-sprockets, suspension assemblies and return rollers were added to the lower hull.

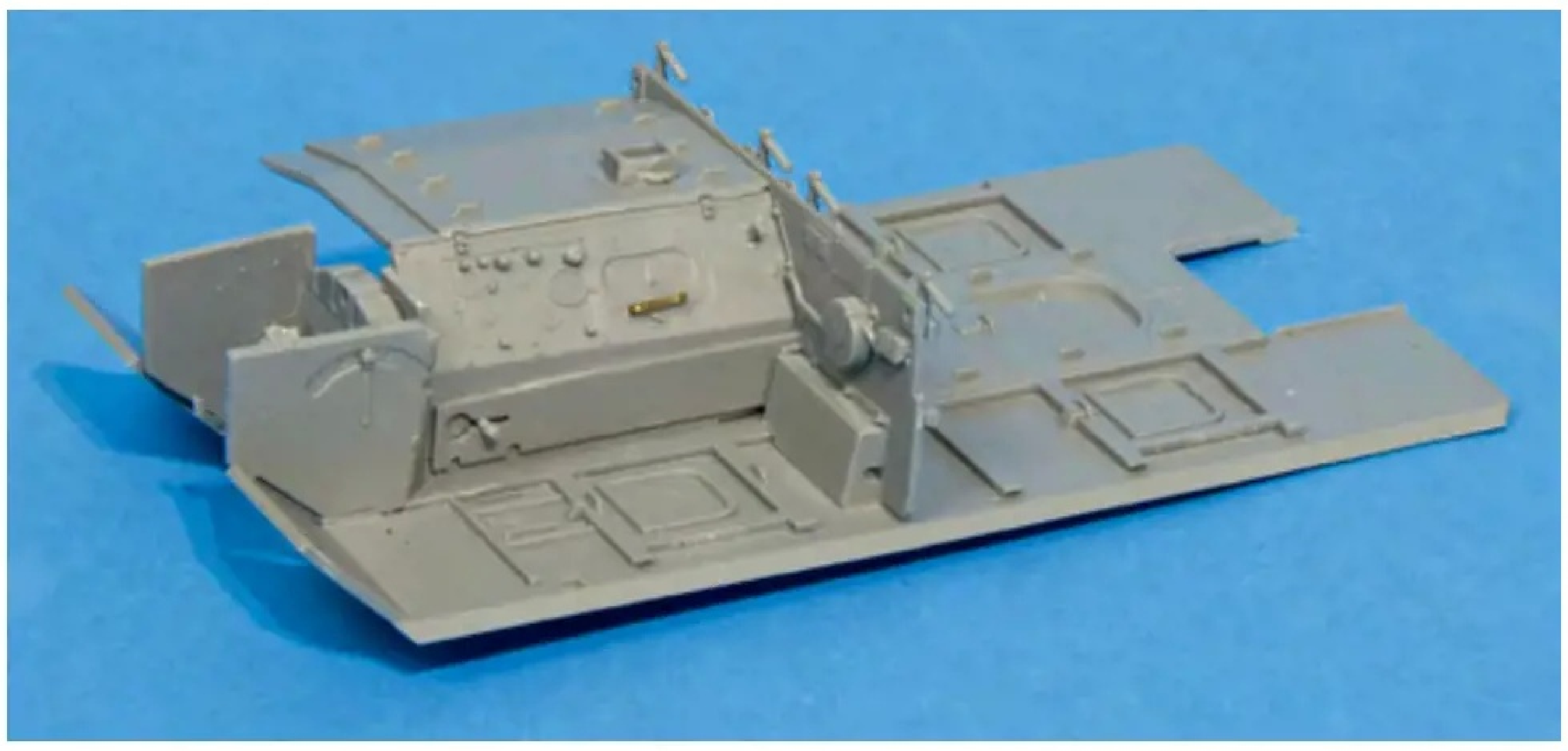
▲ The stages of bogie assembly, from left, with a completed unit at far right.

▼ Stage 7 was completed before 5 and 6, as much for ease of handling as achieving a sturdy sub-assembly…





▲ After almost a week of modelling time, the lower hull and running gear was finished, but the tracks still awaited. Note the PE ring on the idler wheel rim.



▲ …this led to easier construction from Stage 8 onwards, even if the radiator assembly did not fit perfectly. The exact positioning of the dashboard PE handle was vague in the instructions, and later it was noticed that it was incorrect.

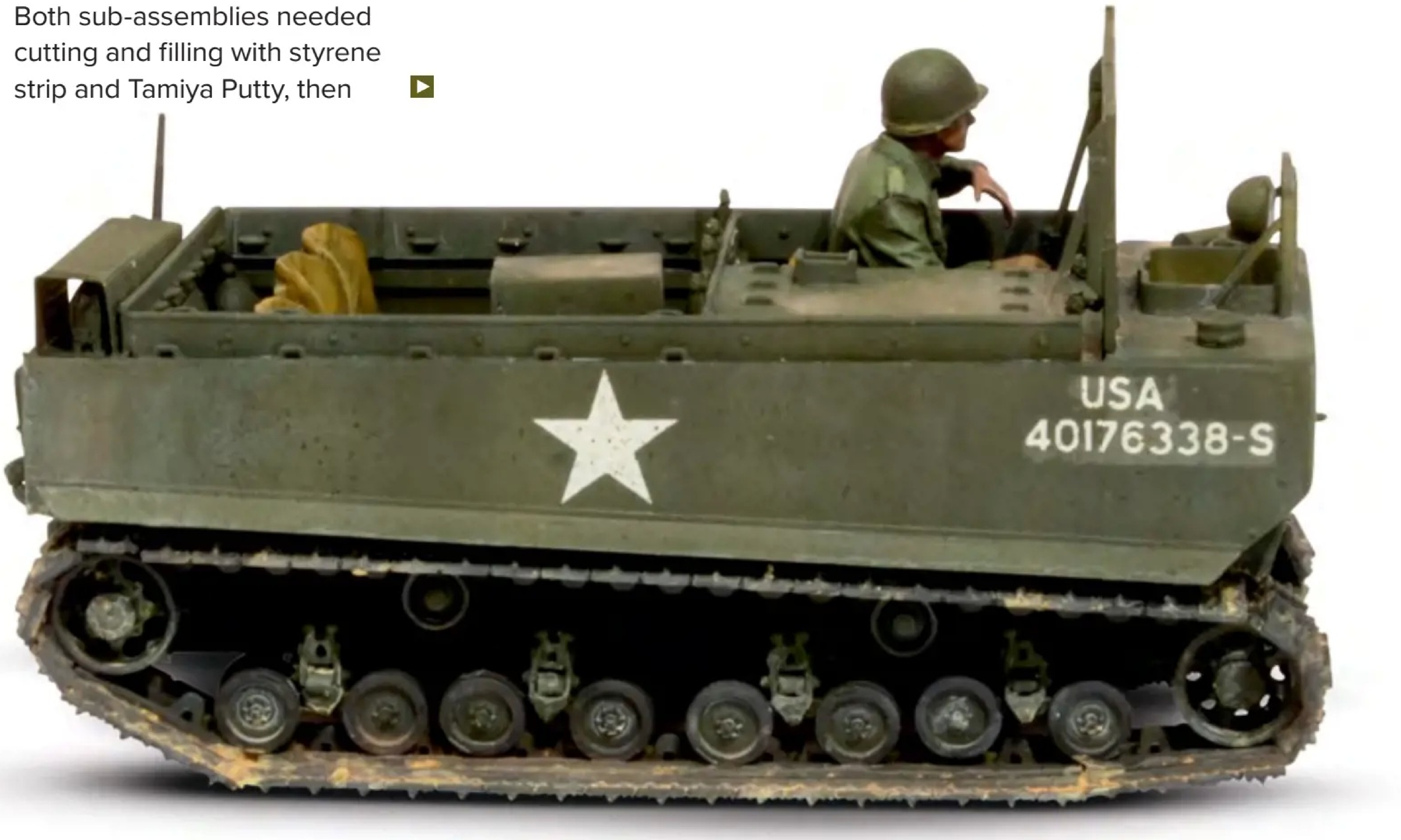
which took two further evenings.

The tracks were not added until after Stage 10, because I needed to have something substantial to hold onto in this operation. The tracks on the real vehicle were made of rubber mats with metal plates attached using bolts, but for some reason Takom decided to supply them as link-and-length offerings; ironically, old-school vinyl tracks would have been a better solution. According to the instructions, the tracks were to be assembled in a certain direction, but it was very difficult to figure it from either the parts or the illustration. Additionally, the tracks sported different lengths of connecting plugs with almost invisible mating areas, making it into – for me at least – a seemingly unsolvable puzzle. Because of this and the wobbly roadwheel assembly, the fit became far from ideal, and this was mostly visible with the gaps between the plates around the drive-sprockets and idlers. I have seen this result in other articles about the kit, but the real vehicle exhibited no gaps at all.

The upper hull/crew area was a much easier ride, but again the instructions were not followed fully. The risk of breaking smaller parts prompted the decision to secure larger pieces to the model first, before adding the finer details. On that front, note that some of the tiniest PE parts were not used, simply due to my lack of ability and dwindling patience.

The side and aft plates required fettling and filing to sit right, but the front plate was obstructed by the radiator installation. Both sub-assemblies needed cutting and filling with styrene strip and Tamiya Putty, then

▶



sanding for neatness. In Stage 14, the exhaust's PE mesh guard should be added and, again, the instruction sequence was not followed to the letter. Takom suggests you add the large mesh over the exhaust, then slide the heat shield into this assembly. Why make it so complicated? Instead, after the exhaust had been fitted, the heat shield was added and the mesh over it (with priming in between).

The windscreen was masked before assembly but left on its own after basic painting was completed. The final parts added were the PE wipers, which were primed and painted while still on the fret; frustratingly, one wiper fell off somewhere between the workbench and photography table.

Colour, decals and dirt

Four different vehicles were shown on the colour guide in the

"Examination of the runners revealed outstanding detail"

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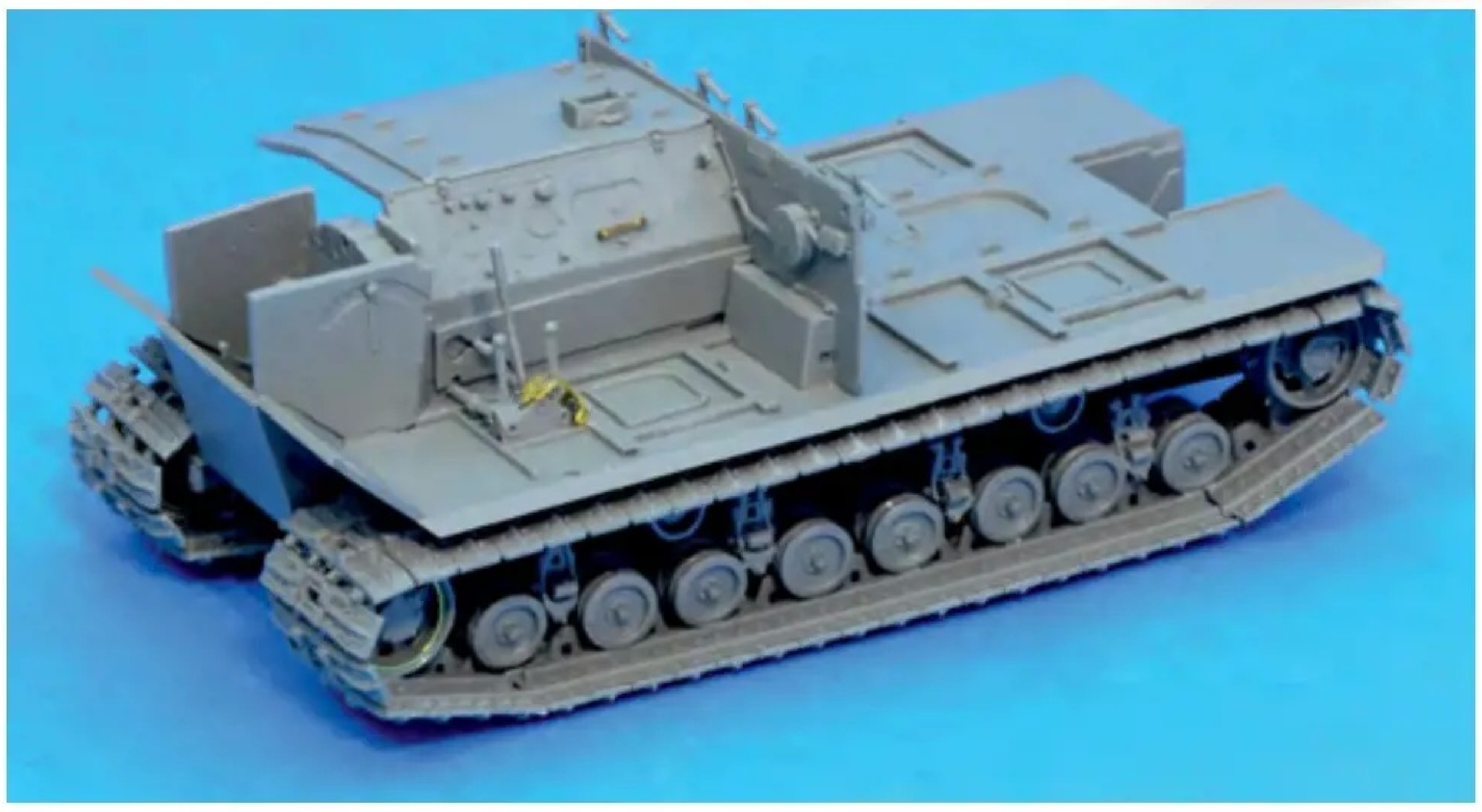
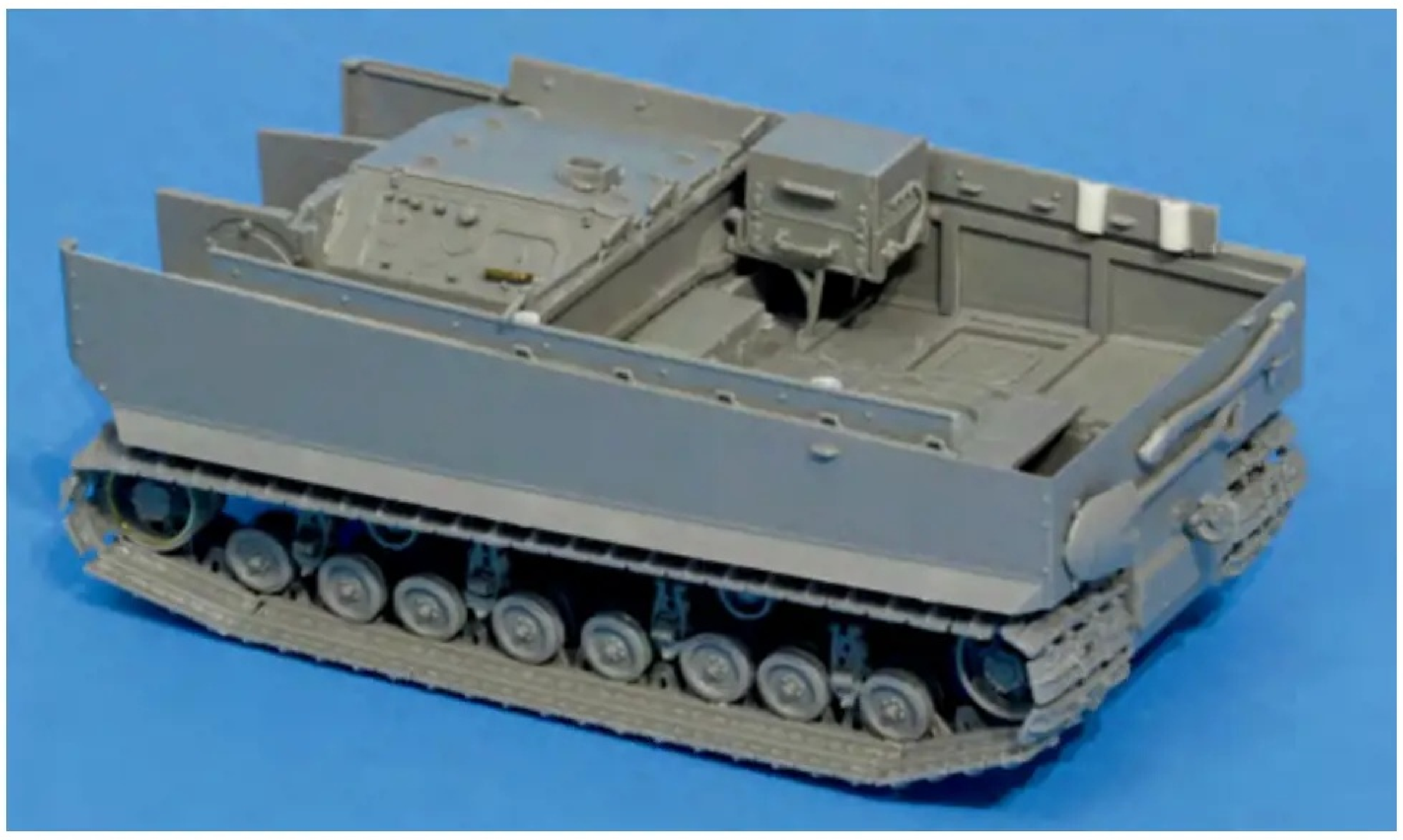
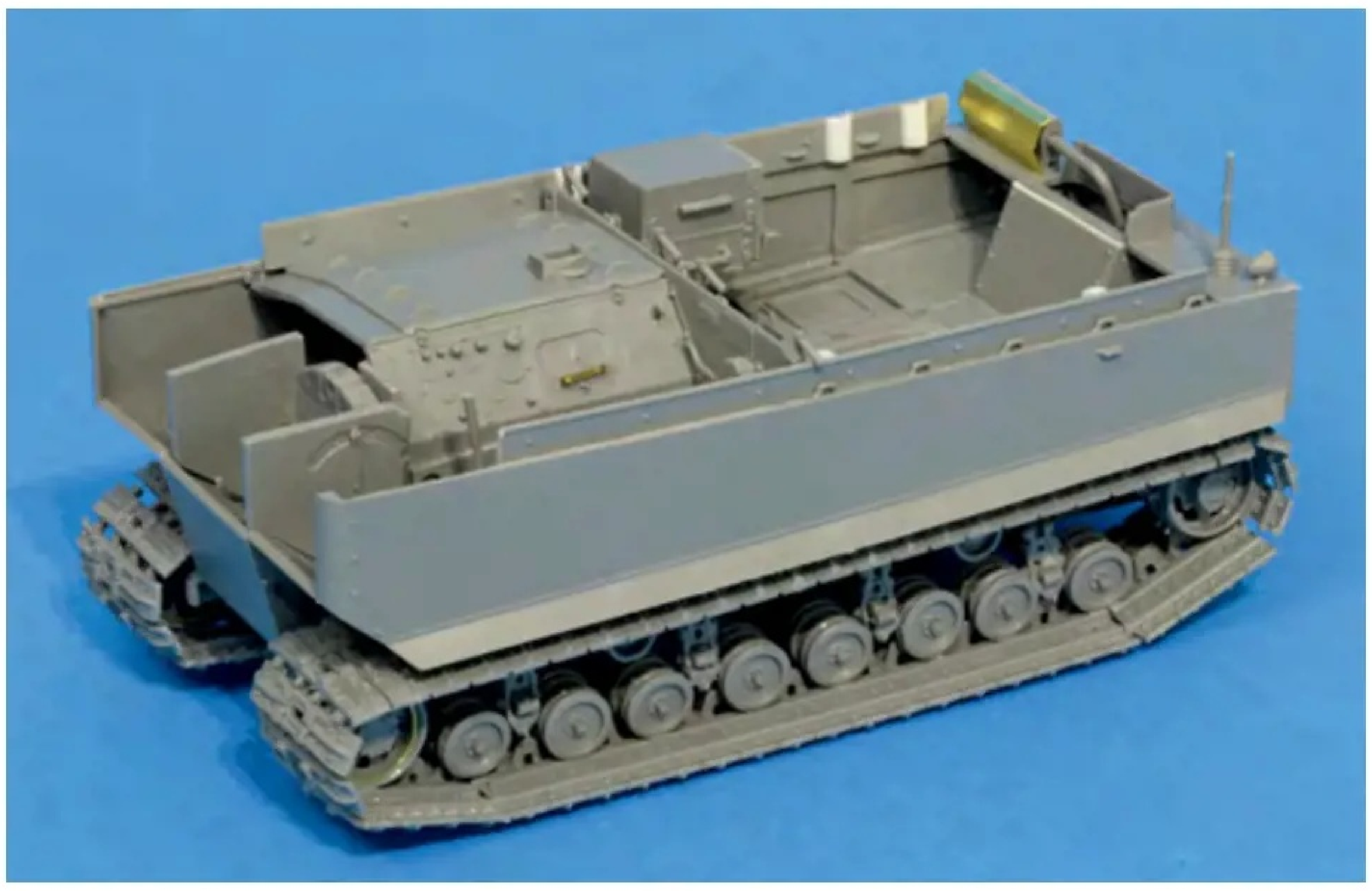


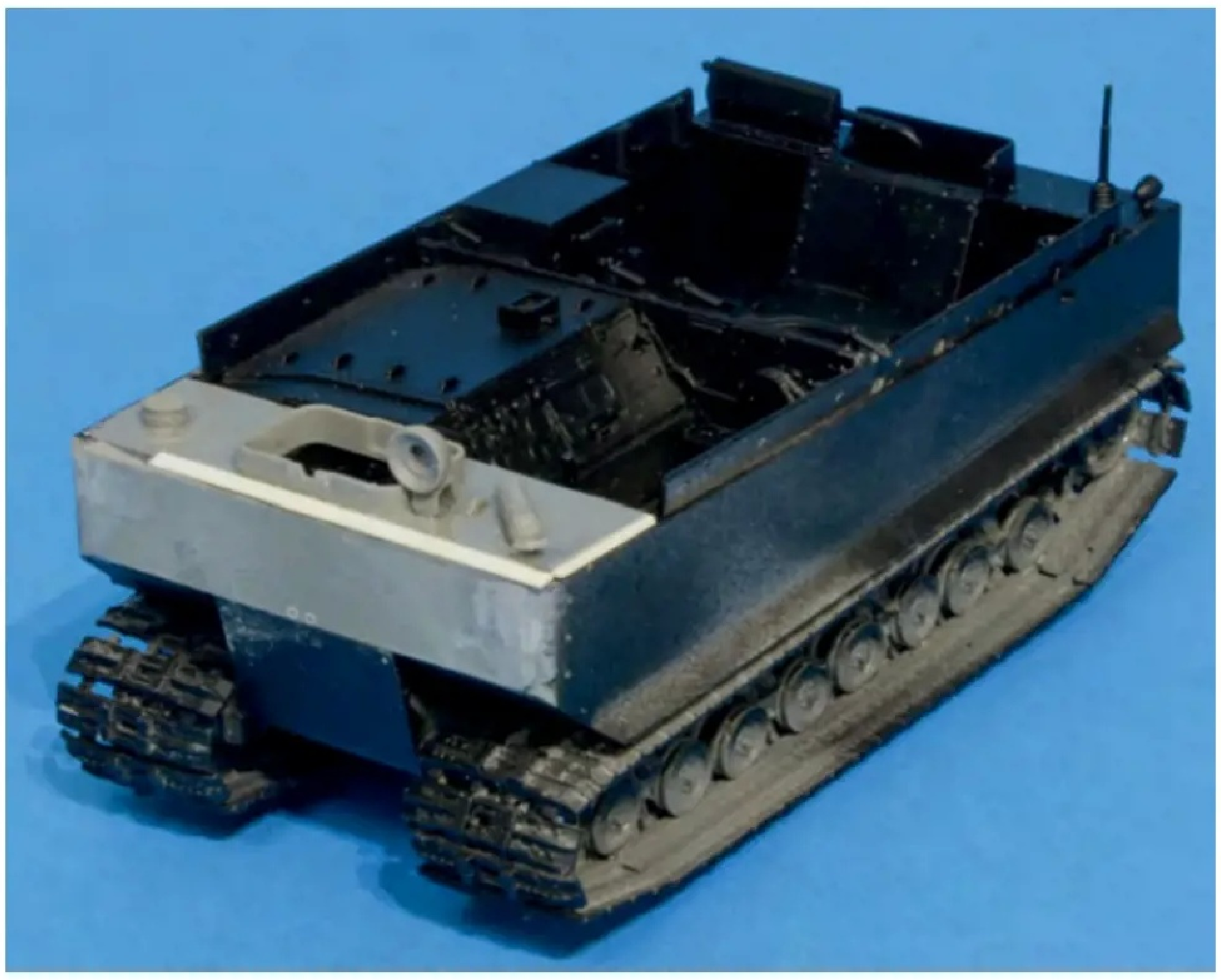
▲ After spending several hours building the tracks, they looked reasonably good, with most of the alignment issues on the bottom runs. Control levers and struts were also added at this stage.



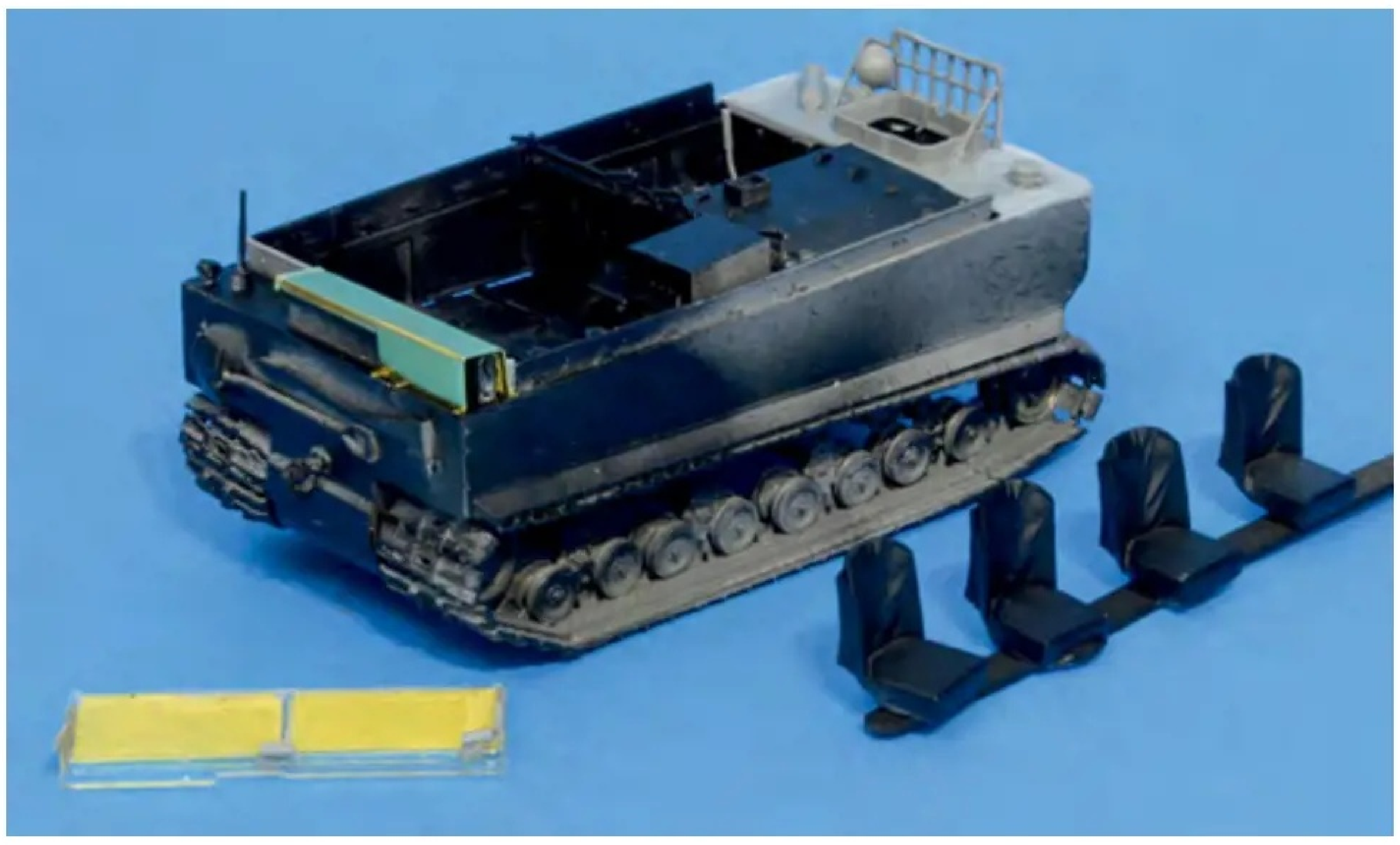
▲ The side and aft panels presented no real issues, but the PE parts for the tarpaulin frame (the latter not included in the kit) were swapped for white styrene tubing cut in half lengthways.



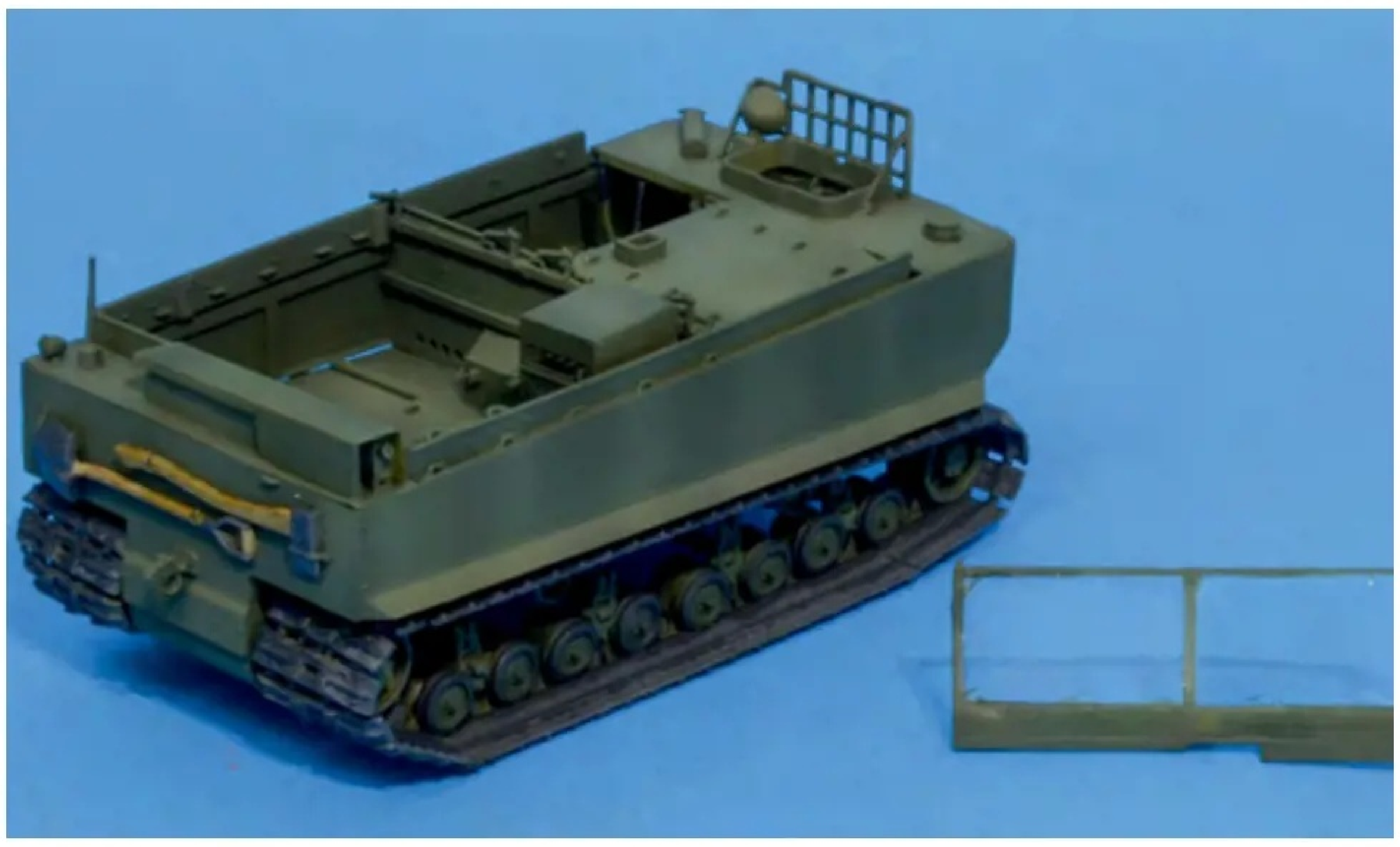
▲ The aft section for the exhaust was added, and a small gap between parts C12 and C14 was filled with sheet styrene shim (arrowed).



▶ Back primer was applied over most of the interior before the front was added, as the radiator would be fully visible. Parts C17/18 did not fit perfectly, as demonstrated by the styrene strip and Tamiya putty visible here.



▲ Sub-assemblies ready for painting; the mesh exhaust grille was added, the windscreen masked and the seats built to be painted separately.



▲ Olive Drab in three progressively lighter versions was airbrushed onto the model. Details and the tracks were brush-painted with appropriate acrylic tones.

USA
40176338-S
C-23

▲ Decals for C Company, 87th Chemical Battalion, 1st US Army, July 1944, were applied and they performed well. The seats received Khaki Grey and Iraqi Sand, then being shaded with Olive Brown and German Camouflage Black Brown.

USA
40176338-S

▲ A light dust patina was added with oils, enamel and acrylic effects. All that remained was another coat of matt varnish, the fitting of headlamp glass and Rubber Black paint on the antenna.

instructions and the Normandy specimen was duly selected for this build. While all wear Olive Drab, two options also sported winter whitewash camouflage. An annoying aspect of the guide is that the colour codes are printed in a font size almost unreadable even with magnification.

Once black primer was applied, Tamya Olive Drab was airbrushed, then highlighted and applied in two striped coats: first with Yellow Green and then a hint of Sky for the uppermost areas. After letting this dry overnight, the tracks, roadwheels and pioneer tools were brush-painted with AK Interactive Rubber Black, different dark grey shades and Vallejo Panzer Aces Old Wood. The seats had been left off and were brushed with Vallejo Khaki Grey and Iraqi Sand, with shading from a wash of the same firm's Olive Brown and German Camouflage Black Brown, before being glued in place. Decals were added over a satin varnish layer, using Micro Sol for better adhesion, over which matt varnish was applied.

As this model represented a fairly new vehicle 'just off the boat' in Normandy in June 1944, weathering was kept on the moderate side. First, the model received a general wash of Vallejo Olive, and Oiled Earth on the running gear and lower hull. Then, different dust and dirt effects were added, initially involving a highly diluted wash of ABT 502 Buff oil paint. After overnight drying, AK's Streaking Grime and Fuel Stains were speckled randomly over the model, before the same firm's AK8015 Dry Ground compound was added to the lower hull and tracks, helping to build up the small missing rubber mat sections of the tracks! Finally, dry pigment was added to vary the dust shades slightly. ▶

USA
1A - 87C
C
23

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

ABT 502 (www.ak-interactive.com)
035 Buff

AK Interactive (www.ak-interactive.com)
AK11004 Ivory
AK11027 Rubber Black
AK11189 Dark Prussian Blue
AK70814 Burnt Cadmium Red
AK012 Streaking Grime
AK025 Fuel Stains
AK8015 Dry Ground

Microscale (www.microscale.com)
Micro Sol

Tamiya (www.hobbyco.net)
XF-4 Yellow Green
XF-21 Sky
XF-62 Olive Drab

Vallejo (www.creativemodels.co.uk)
70.819 Iraqi Sand
70.822 German Camouflage Black Brown
70.845 Sunny Skin Tone
70.880 Khaki Grey
70.810 Royal Purple
70.889 Olive Brown
74.012 Malefic Flesh
76.519 Olive
76.521 Oiled Earth
70.310 Old Wood
70.244 NCO US Infantry Europe 1944-45

“This model is not for the beginner”

John Doe

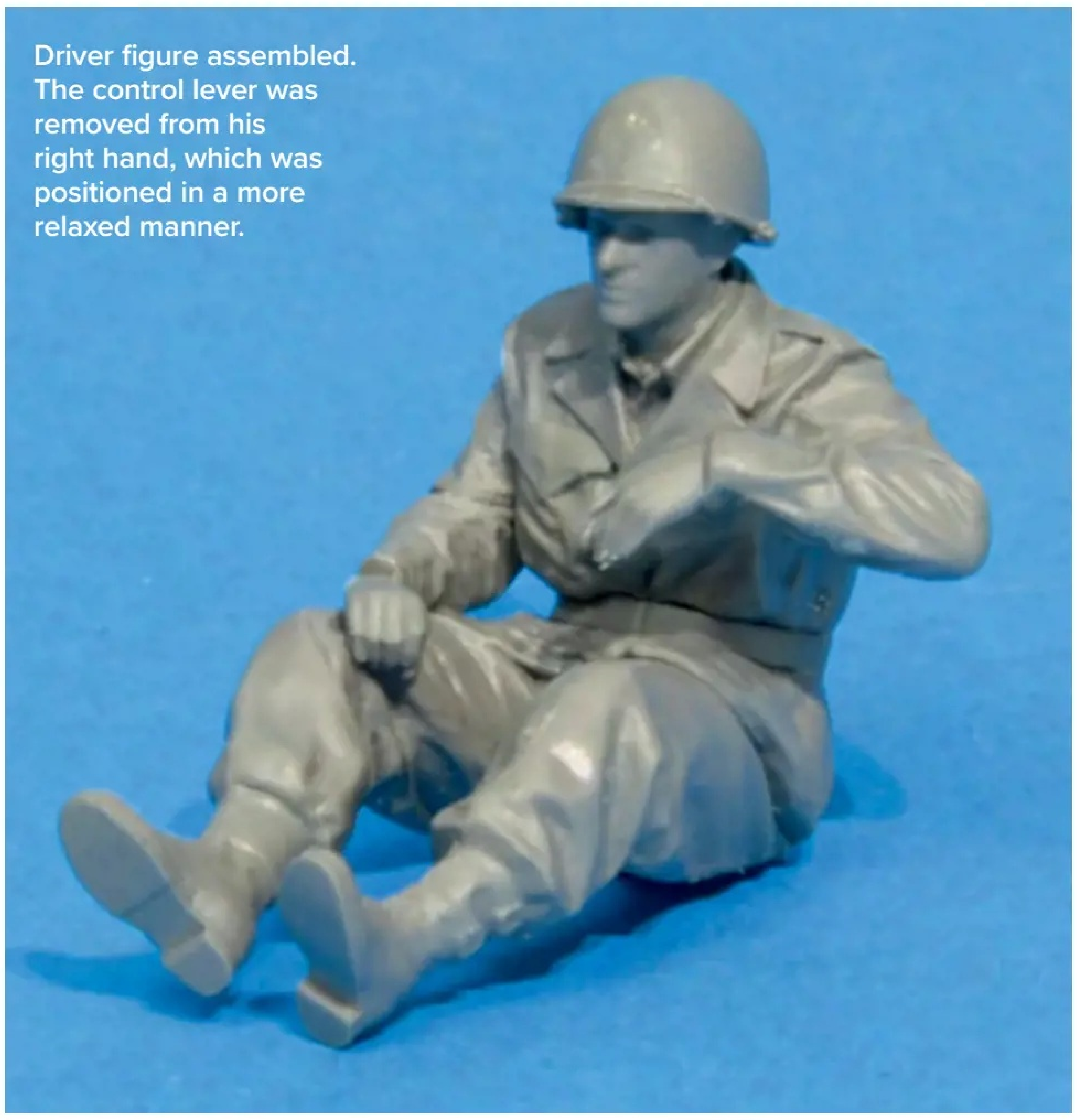
First impressions of the figure were positive – a good pose and anatomy, coupled with subtle details, would usually make for easy painting. While assembling the parts, though, closer inspection revealed that short cuts had been made: there was a mould line across the helmet, no buttons or seams were present and the boots and gaiters were simplified. But most annoying was the soft facial detail. The eyes were merely almond-shaped hollows, there was a blob for the nose and the mouth wasn’t much more than a slit. No hair was visible either and this lack of features prompted me to dub him ‘John Doe’.

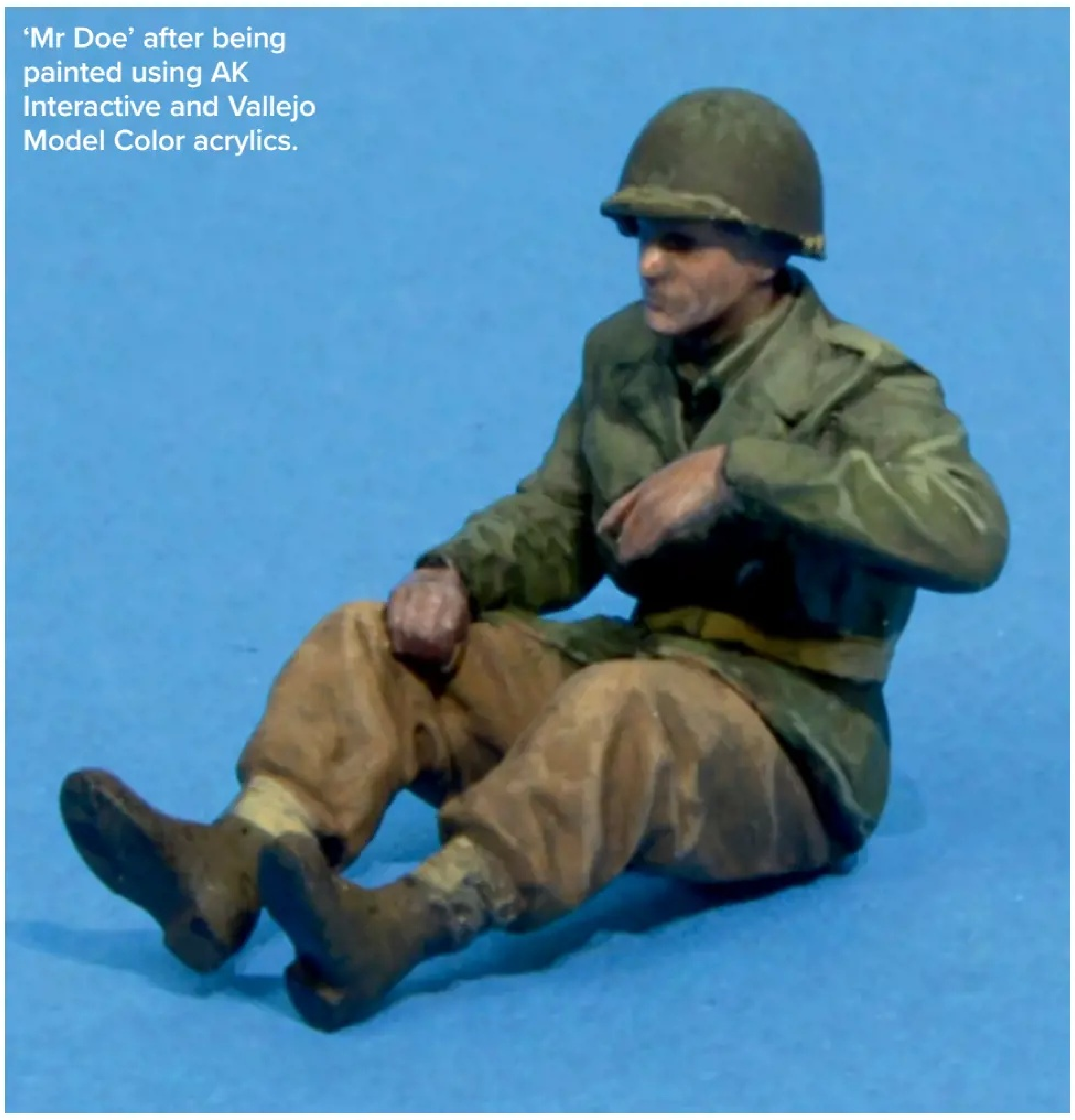
The right hand came moulded gripping one of the control levers, but this lever was already added as a separate part – an option not too clearly highlighted in the instructions. Thus, the lever was removed from the hand, which was positioned to rest on John’s thigh instead.

The uniform got its colour using paints and instructions from the Vallejo set 70244 NCO US Infantry Europe 1944-45. Skin tones involved mixes of AK Interactive Dark Prussian Blue and Burnt Cadmium Red, Vallejo Sunny Skin Tone and AK11004 Ivory over a Vallejo Malefic Flesh/Royal Purple base.

Verdict

As you will have realised by now, this model is not for the beginner, nor those used to building a Tamiya kit in a weekend. Old rugby player fingers and declining eyesight was of no help either, in my case. The high parts count (nearing 370 for a model just 8.5cm long), odd plastic, the fit of small parts and unclear instructions in several areas made life challenging. However, the detail and moulding is first class, but what good does this do, you might ask, if the kit lacks buildability? That said, it is a detailed rendering of an interesting subject that’s (oddly) been ignored by manufacturers for decades.


Driver figure assembled. The control lever was removed from his right hand, which was positioned in a more relaxed manner.


‘Mr Doe’ after being painted using AK Interactive and Vallejo Model Color acrylics.

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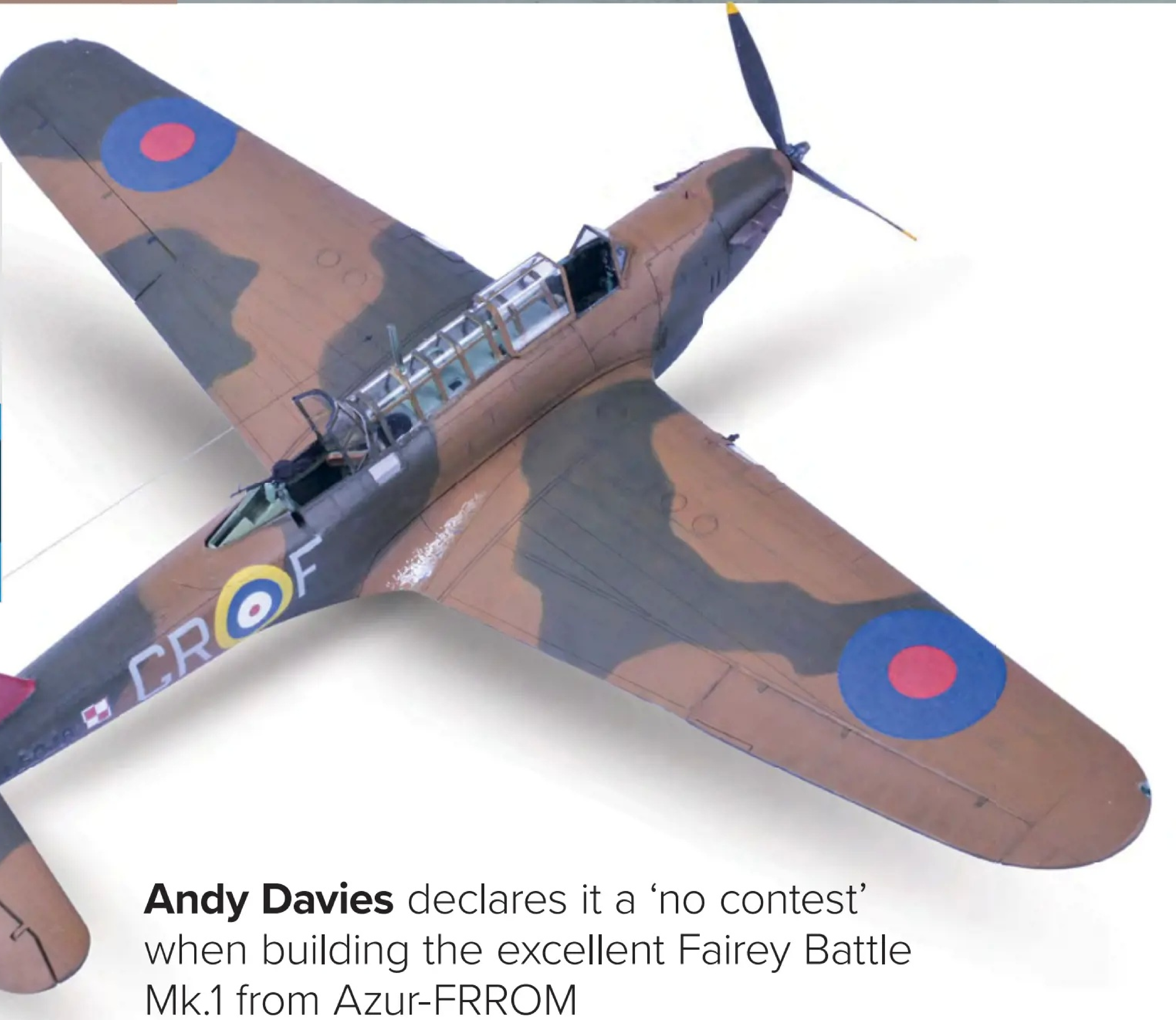


MODEL SPEC

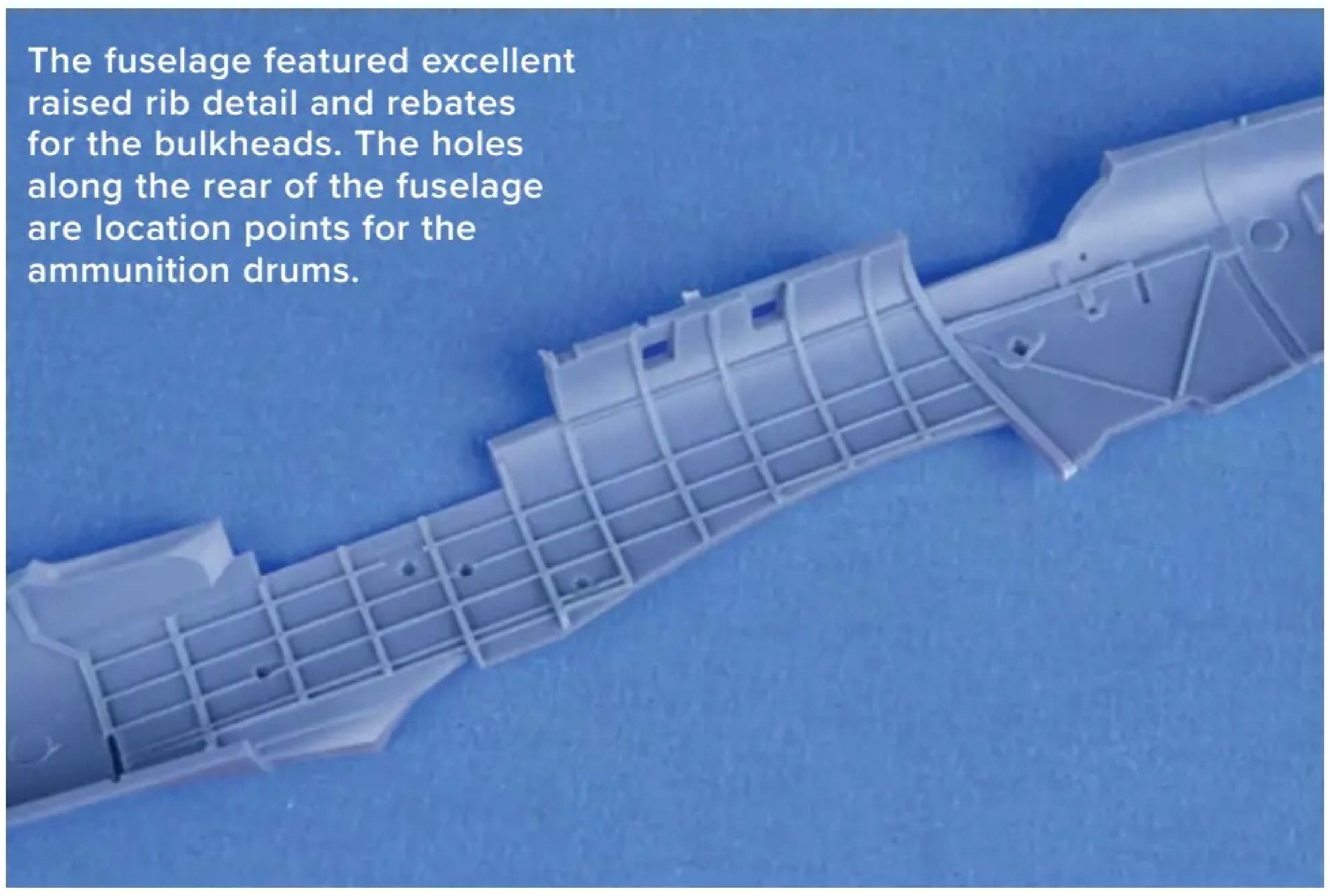
Fairey Battle Mk.I 'Poles in UK'
By: Azur-FRROM
Stock code: FR0047
Scale: 1/72
Price: £24.99
Available from: www.frrom.com

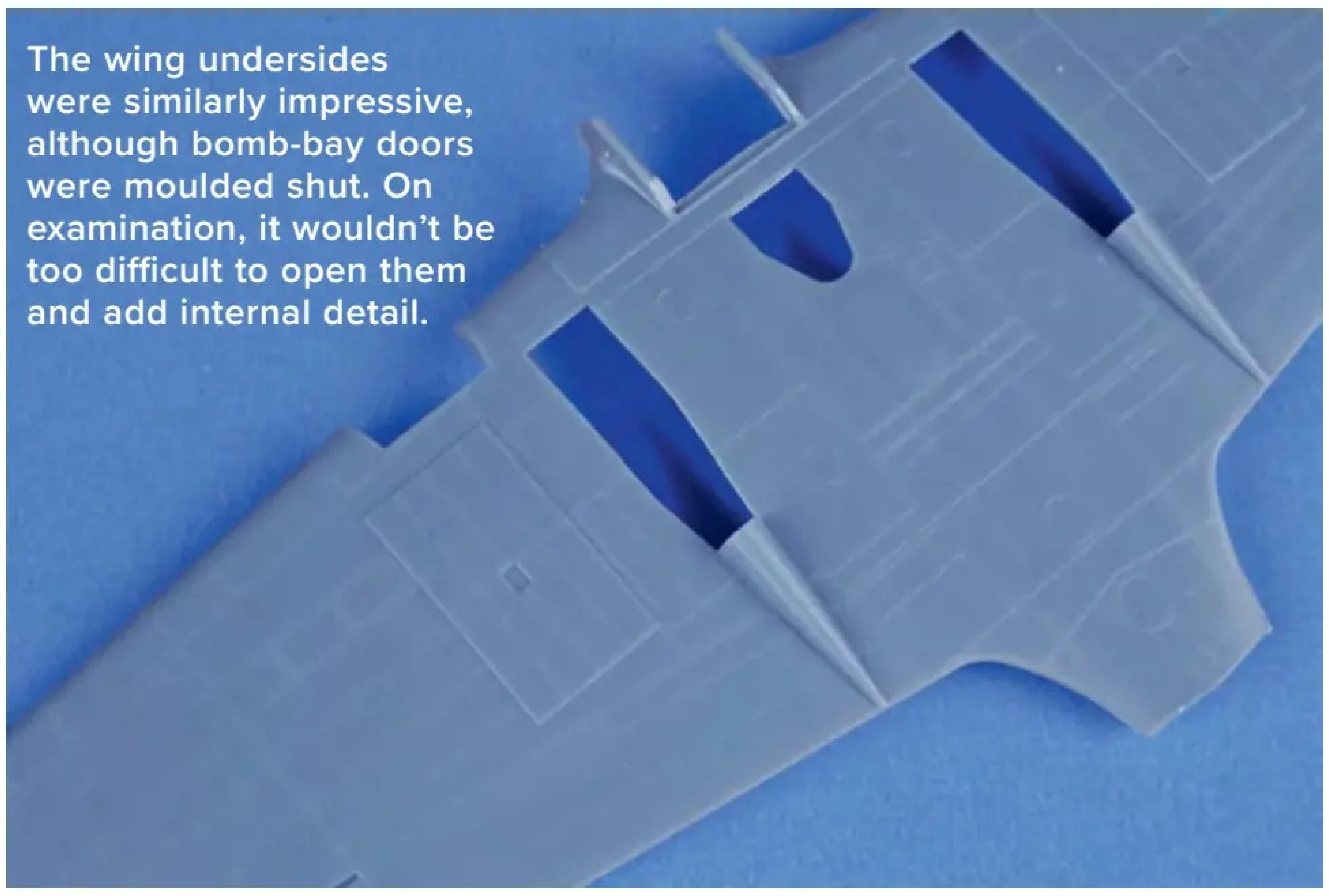
1/72 Fairey Battle Mk.I 'Poles in UK'

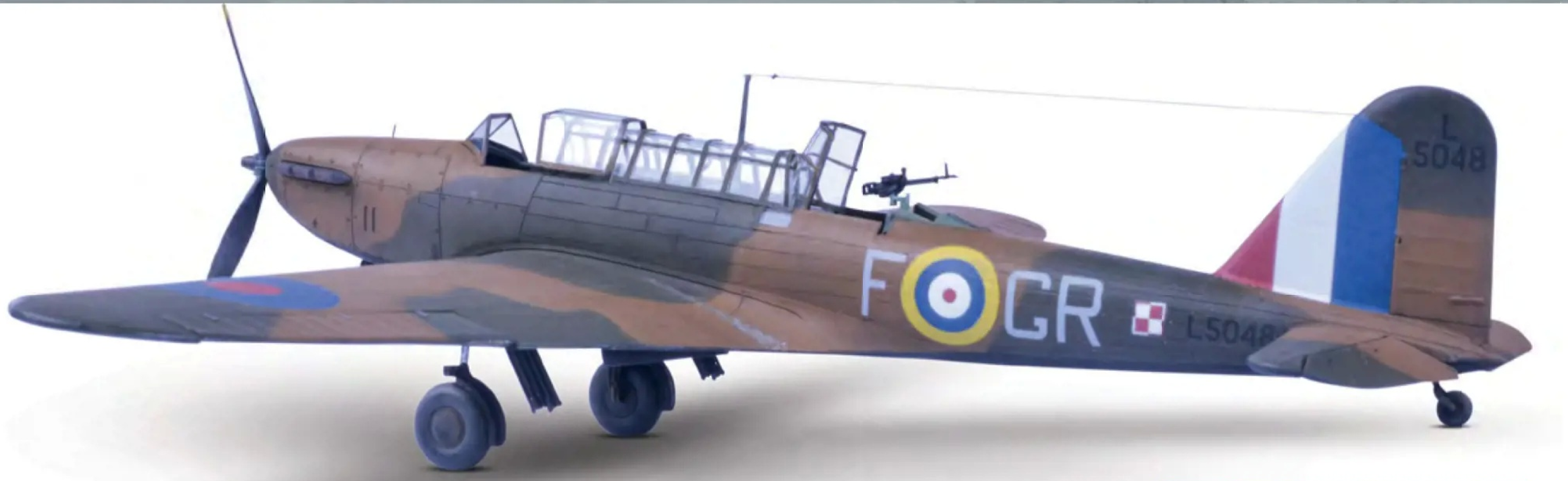
Battle Stations

Andy Davies declares it a 'no contest' when building the excellent Fairey Battle Mk.1 from Azur-FRROM

The RAF received its first Fairey Battle in 1937, with more than 40 squadrons eventually flying the type. On May 10, 1940, the first bombing raids revealed the type's vulnerability when 13 out of 23 aircraft were lost; despite this, during the 'Phoney War' the type achieved the distinction of scoring the RAF's first aerial victory in the conflict. That month, though, the Battles of the Advanced Air Striking Force (AASF) suffered heavy losses, frequently exceeding 50% per sortie. Generally regarded as a failure in its primary role as a light bomber, the Battle found more success as a training aircraft and target tug. Overall production of the Battle, during its manufacturing life, including prototypes, was 2,201 machines,


The fuselage featured excellent raised rib detail and rebates for the bulkheads. The holes along the rear of the fuselage are location points for the ammunition drums.


The wing undersides were similarly impressive, although bomb-bay doors were moulded shut. On examination, it wouldn't be too difficult to open them and add internal detail.



with the last aircraft leaving service in 1949.

Azur-FRROM's characteristic, blue-themed top-opening box contained three blue-grey runners, holding 83 parts (15 designated as not for use) and a single clear frame for the cockpit glazing and landing lights. All parts were moulded cleanly, with sharp detail and no flash present. Also included was a digitally printed decal sheet for three aircraft and a pamphlet-style A5 set of instructions featuring full-colour diagrams.

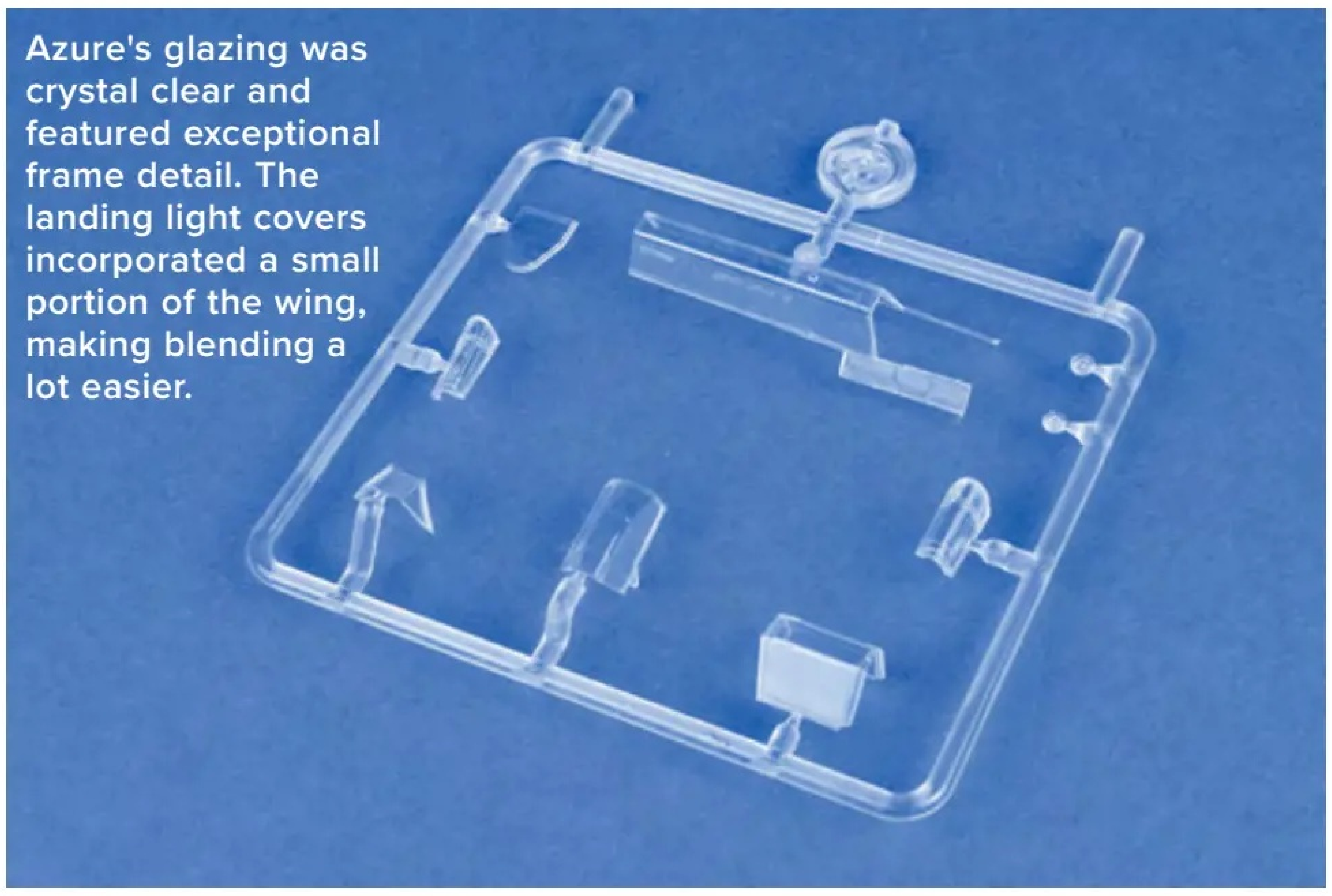
Away with the Faireys

Assembly began with the cockpit, which comprised seven parts, including a detailed floor, rear bulkhead, seat, control column, instrument controls, and rudder pedals. Assembly was straightforward with no nasty surprises. Following assembly, Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Black, diluted 60/40 with Mr. Color Rapid Thinner, was used as a primer. Mr. Paint's MRP-111 Interior Grey Green (WWII RAF) was then applied lightly over the surfaces, allowing the black primer to be visible, providing a shadowing effect. The base colour was lightened with MRP-99 US Navy White, to add highlights and 'busy' the interior detail… this being applied to various instruments and upper surfaces. This process was then repeated on the rear gunner's position, including the revolving Vickers K machine gun mount and side shelves.

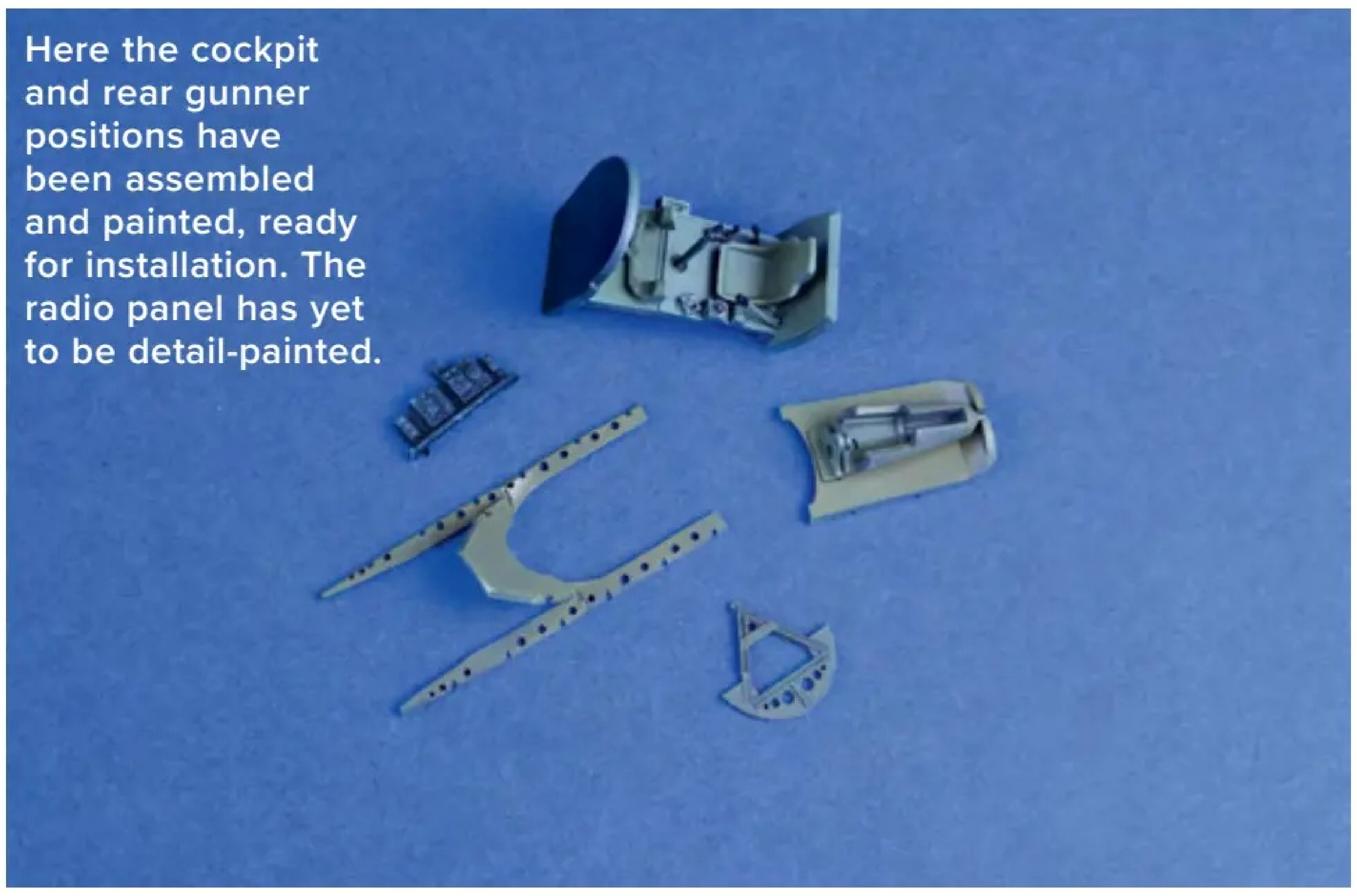
The fuselage sidewalls featured excellent raised rib detail, which cried out for dry-brushing and oil washes. Several separate items were fitted to the sidewalls, including spare ammunition drums, throttle/mixture controls, the

▶

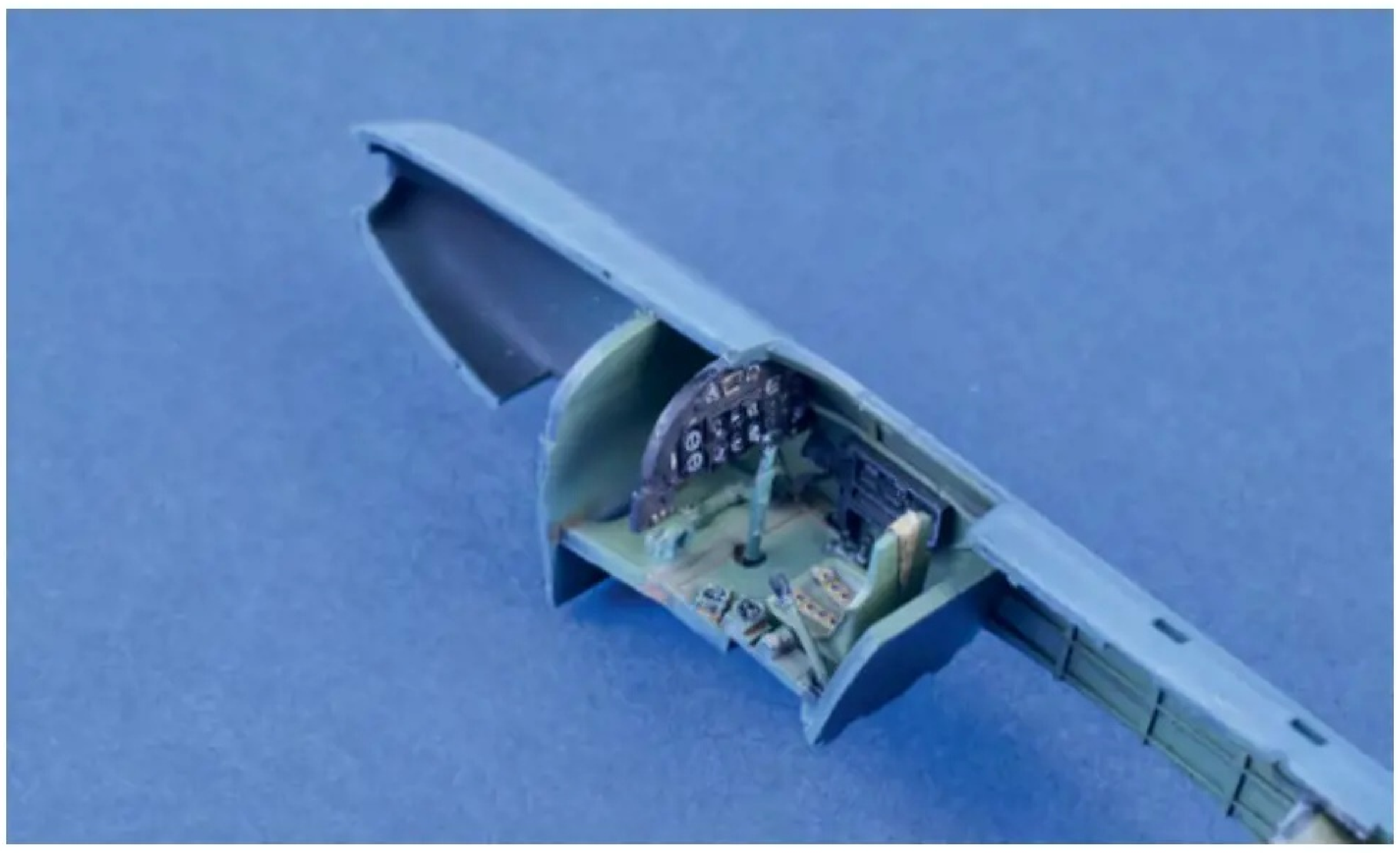
▲ The kit's Vickers K gun was moulded crisply and more than adequate for the job, although, for extra fidelity, a resin replacement could be used.



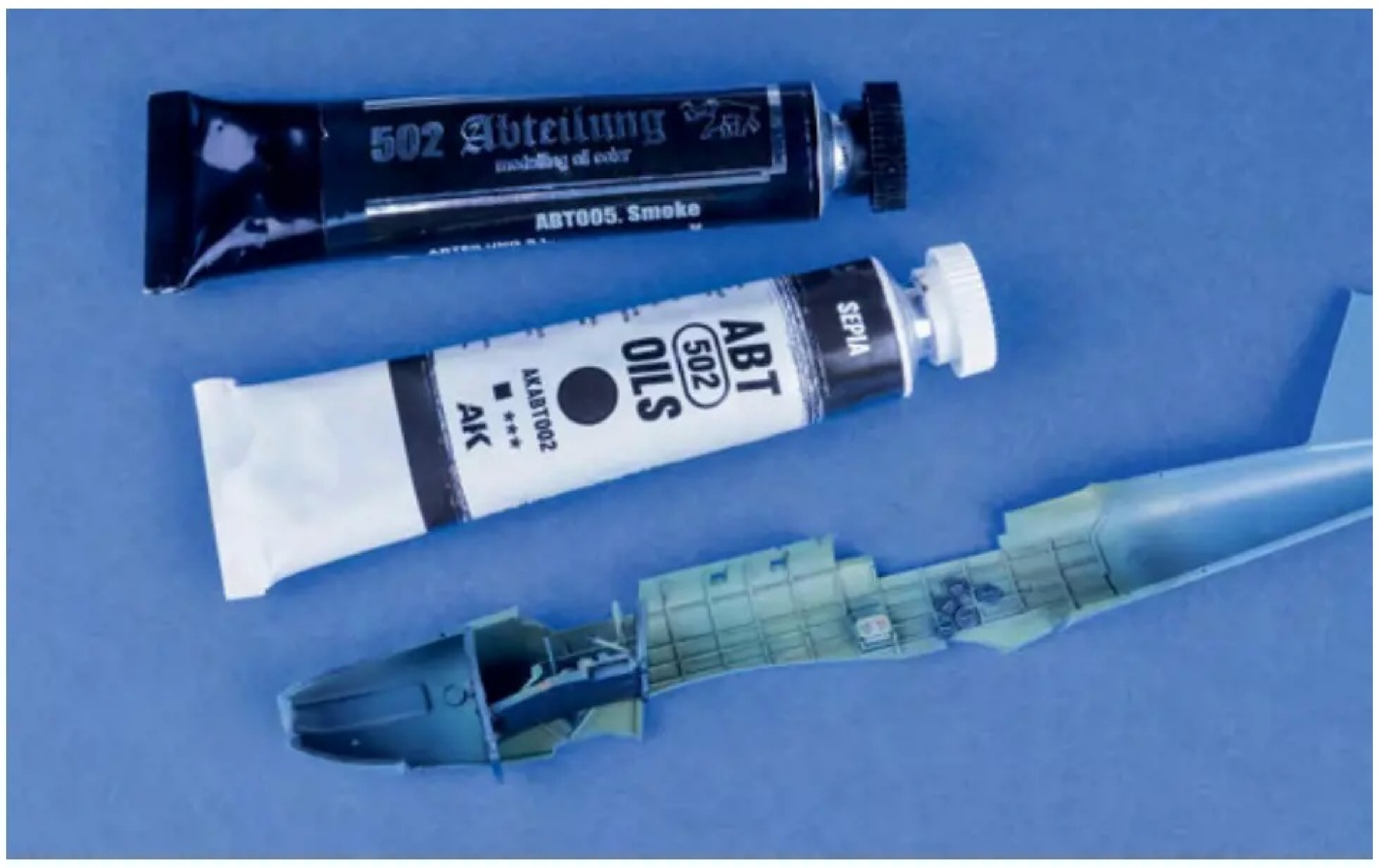
Azure's glazing was crystal clear and featured exceptional frame detail. The landing light covers incorporated a small portion of the wing, making blending a lot easier.



Here the cockpit and rear gunner positions have been assembled and painted, ready for installation. The radio panel has yet to be detail-painted.



▲ Instrument dials were added using decals from Mike Grant's CKP072 Cockpit Details sheet, plus HGW's fabric seat harness (HGW172002). Various Abteilung oil washes were used to add shadows and highlights.



▲ The fuselage interior was painted MRP-111 Interior Grey-Green, before receiving a wash of Abteilung/AK oils; raised detail was dry-brushed with XF-53 Light Grey.

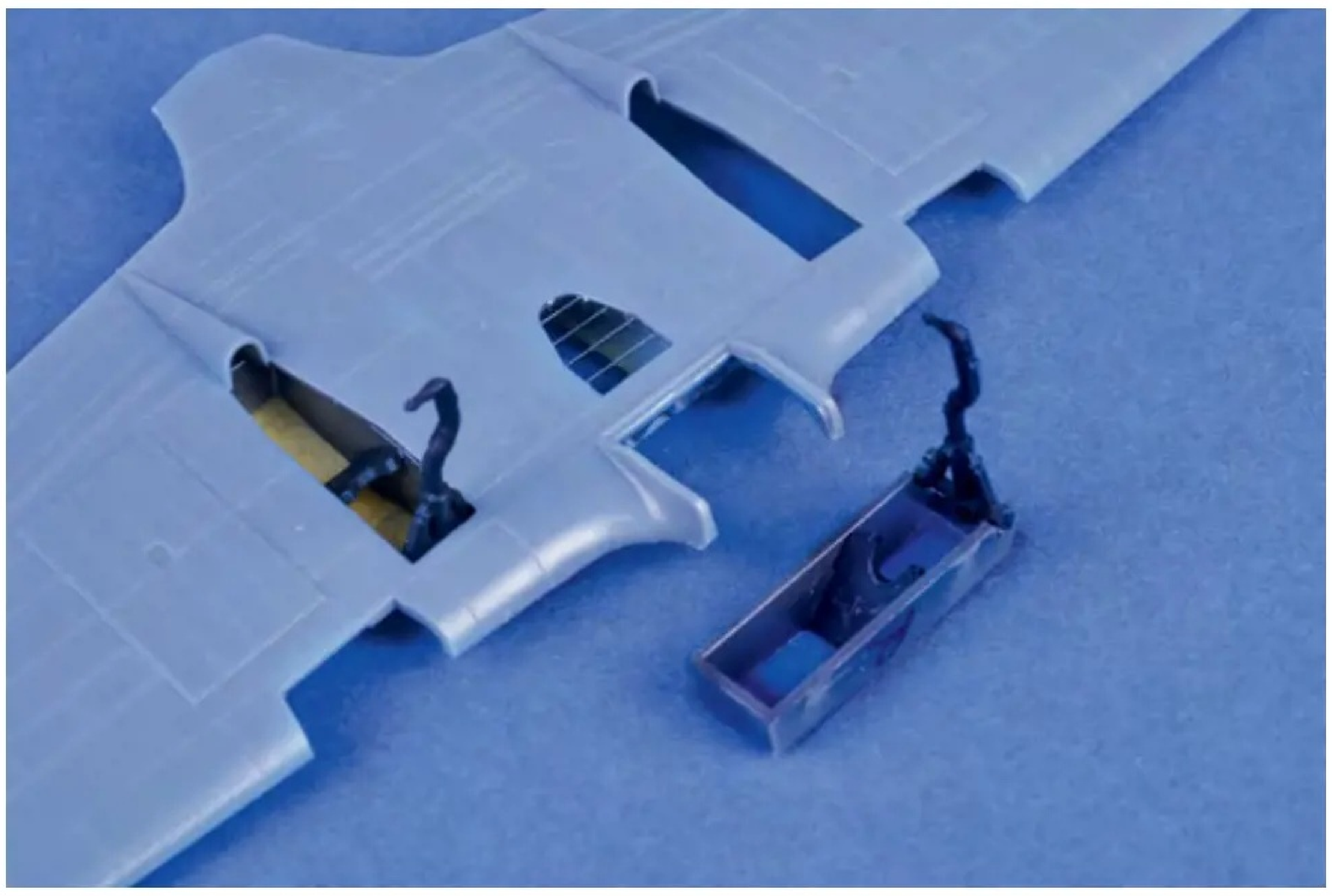
navigator's seat (which can be folded), and radio equipment. The gunner's seat was supplied in three parts: a plinth, padded seat cushions, and a backrest. Before being attached to the gunner's floor, the seat was painted MRP-111, and the leather cushions were detailed with Tamiya XF-64 Red Brown. Next, MRP-173 Tyre Rubber was used to paint the instrument and radio panels, plus ammunition drums. All were then dry-brushed with XF-19 Sky Grey. The drums were attached to the sidewalls and left to cure before being washed with Abteilung's ABT-007 Starship Filth and ABT-002 Sepia oils.

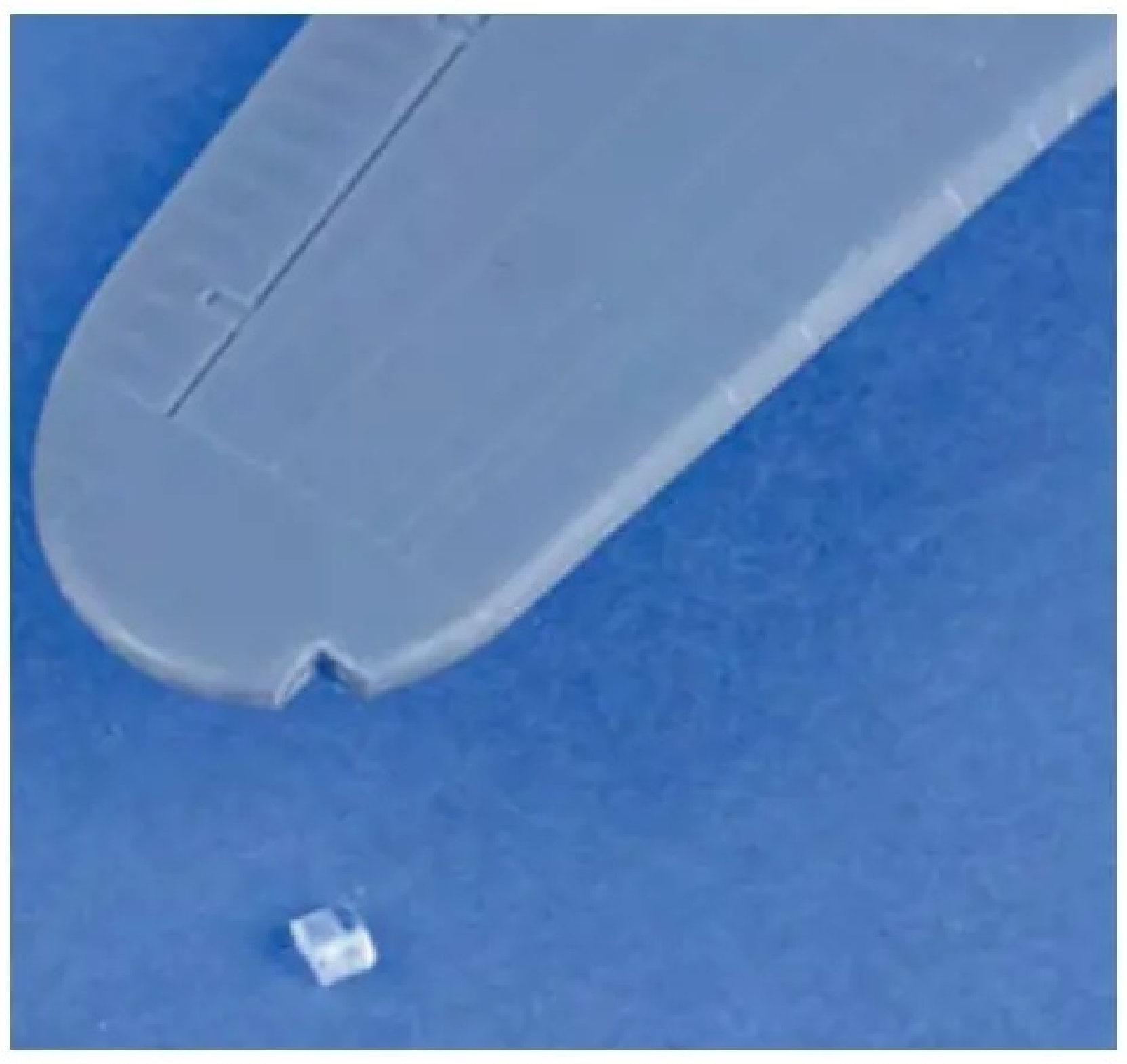
Decals were supplied for the instrument panel and radio, but accidental damage meant these were replaced by individual dials from an old Mike Grant decal set, which was found lurking in the spares box. Microscale's Micro Set and Micro Sol helped the decals conform to the moulded surfaces, with GX-112 Super Clear UV Cut sealing them. A word of warning: Azur-FRROM's instructions on placement of several interior items – including the instrument panel – are a little vague, so time spent test-fitting these items is well worth the effort.

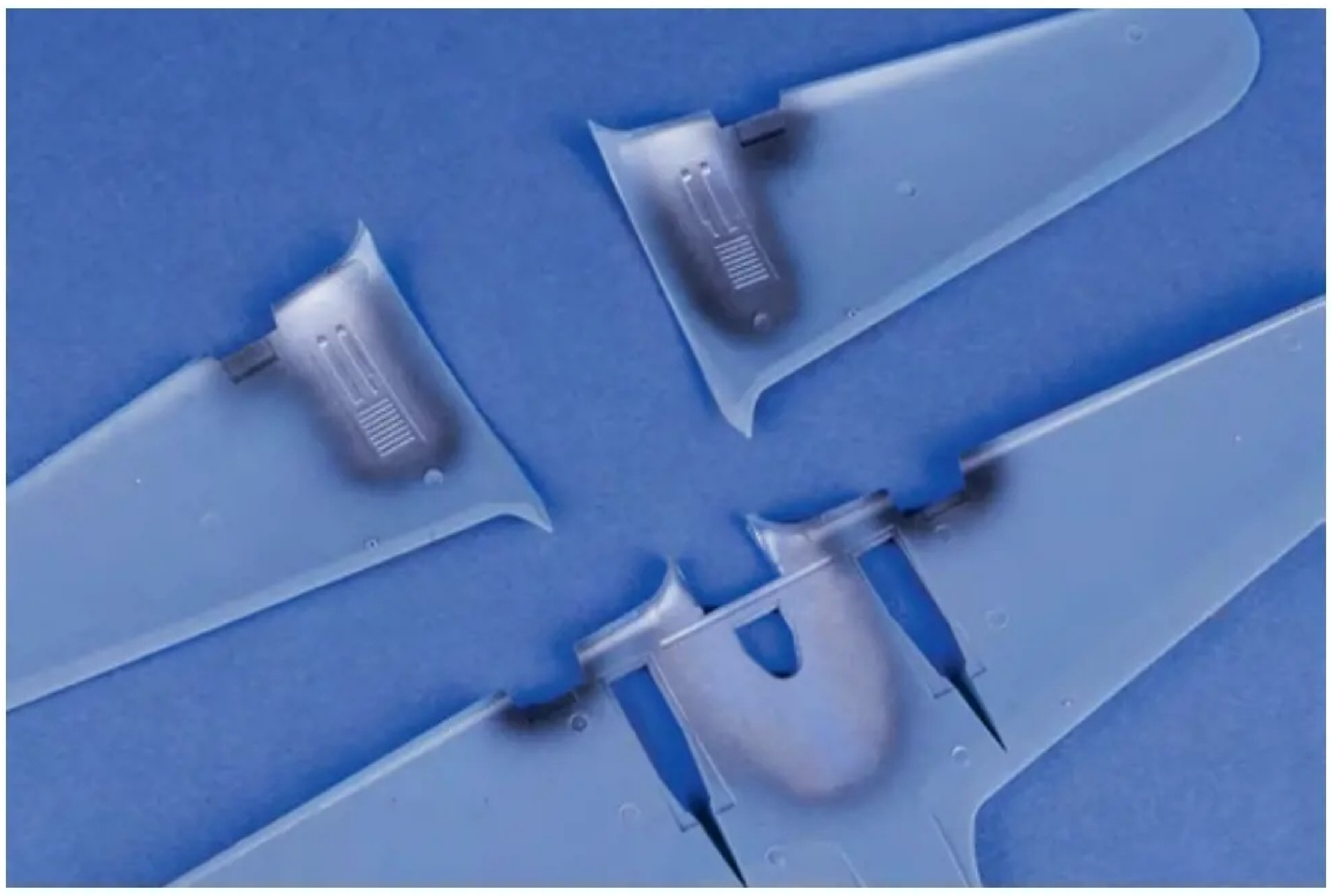
> **"Finally, we get a high-quality model of the neglected and much requested Fairey Battle"**

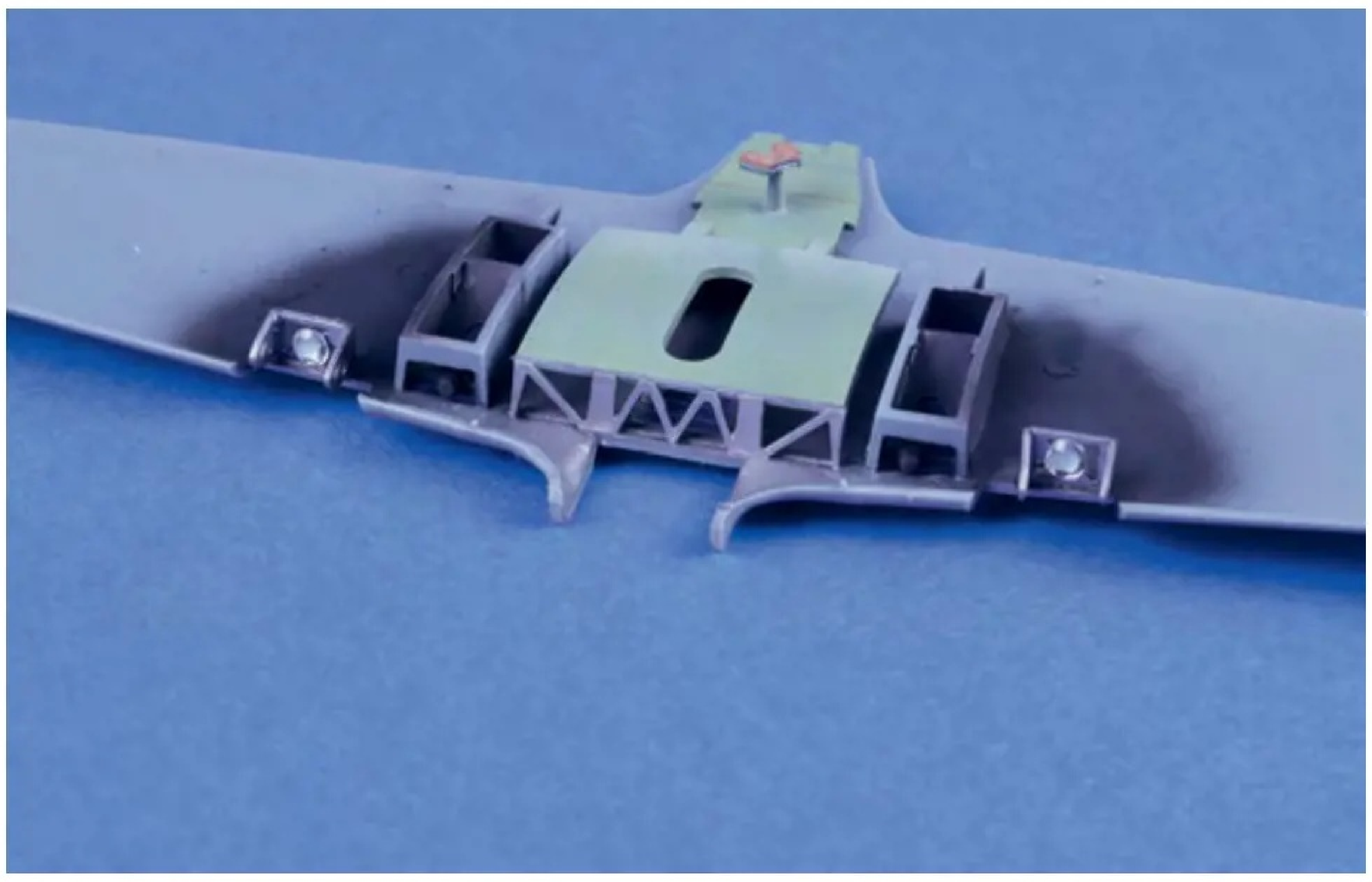
Don't forget the radio

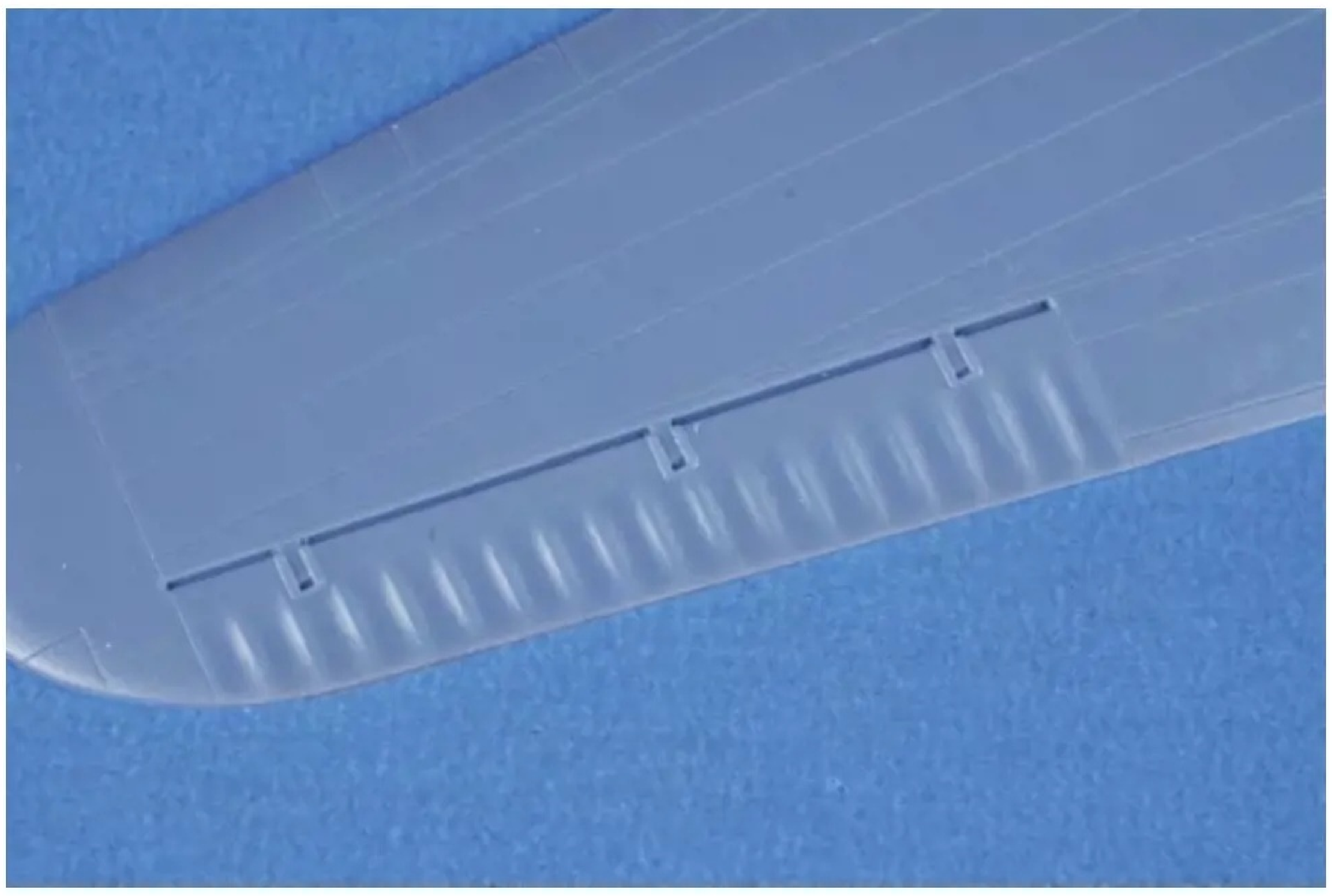
There was little clearance while closing the fuselage halves, meaning extra care was required to ensure a good fit. The gunner's sills were then attached to an angled panel – itself installed on the Vickers K mounting 'shelf' – which resulted in a flimsy structure that was difficult to fit precisely without causing damage. It proved easier to fit one of the sill bars first (in this case the starboard item), then the rear and forward panels and finally the port bar. This allowed the fuselage halves to be assembled without fear of crushing/damaging the delicate components. It's easy to overlook things, which is what occurred when I forgot to attach the AR/WR 1082 and 1083 radio set panel beneath the rear gun platform.


▲ The main undercarriage legs were dry-fitted to their respective bays and allowed to rotate so they could be stored safely during construction. The bays were first painted with AK488 Matte Aluminium.


▲ The kit's moulded wingtip navigation lights were replaced with scrap clear runner material.


▲ Both the navigator's floor and undercarriage bay ceilings received AK-479 Aluminium, plus an ABT-002 Sepia oil wash. When dry, A.MIG-1407 Engine Grime was applied.


▲ With the bays in place, the navigator's floor, lattice supports and gunner's seat were installed; seat cushions were treated with XF-64 Red Brown to simulate leather. The landing lights received Aluminium, then attached using Ultra Glue PVA.



▲ The only let-down with the kit was the overdone scalloped fabric effect on the flying surfaces, so replacements were sourced from the spares box and shaped to fit.

▲ The ailerons were removed via a JLC razor saw and small flat file, before the wings were joined with the fuselage, along with the horizontal stabilisers.

▲ With the glazing attached and partially masked, with lengths of Aizu 0.7mm tape used to represent interior frames, the replacement ailerons were added.

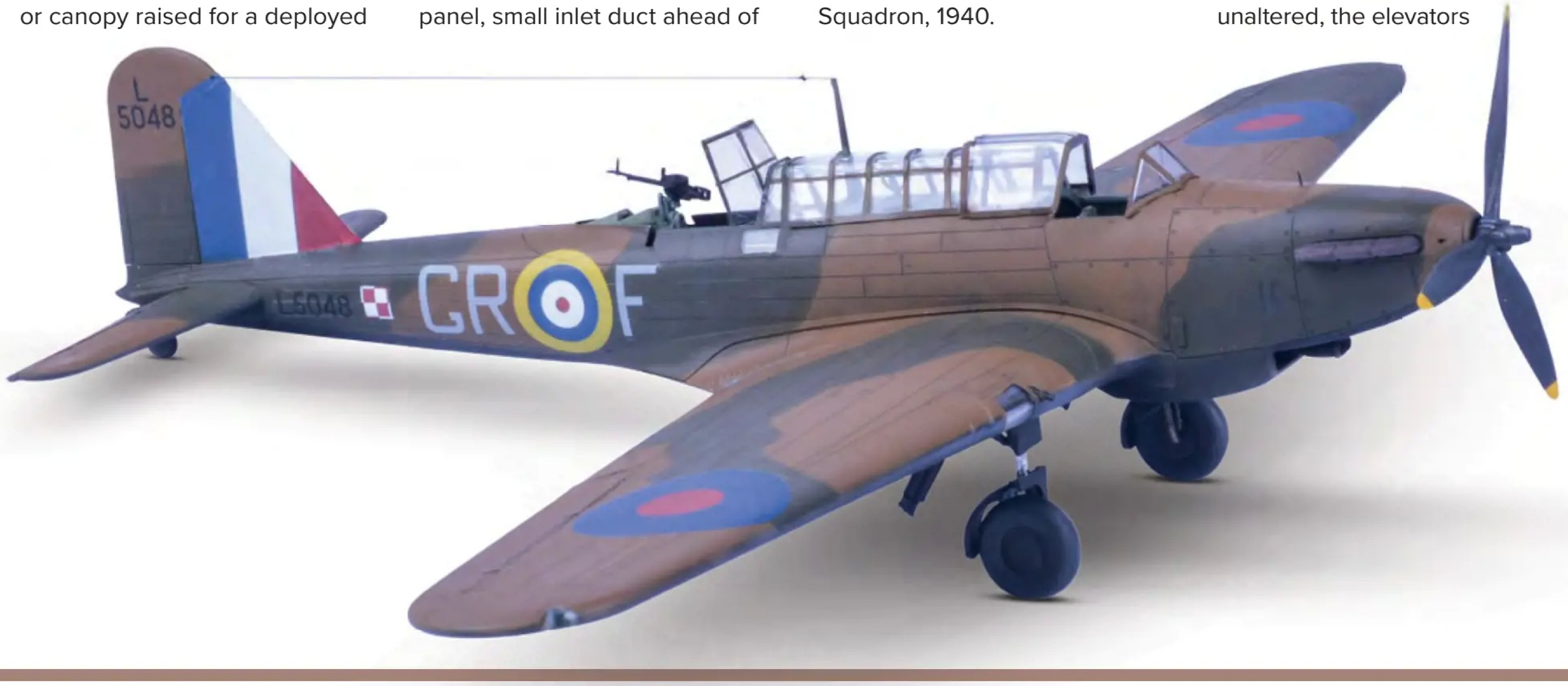
▲ Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Black acted as a primer, before AK-481 Polished Aluminium was airbrushed onto those areas that would later receive chipping.

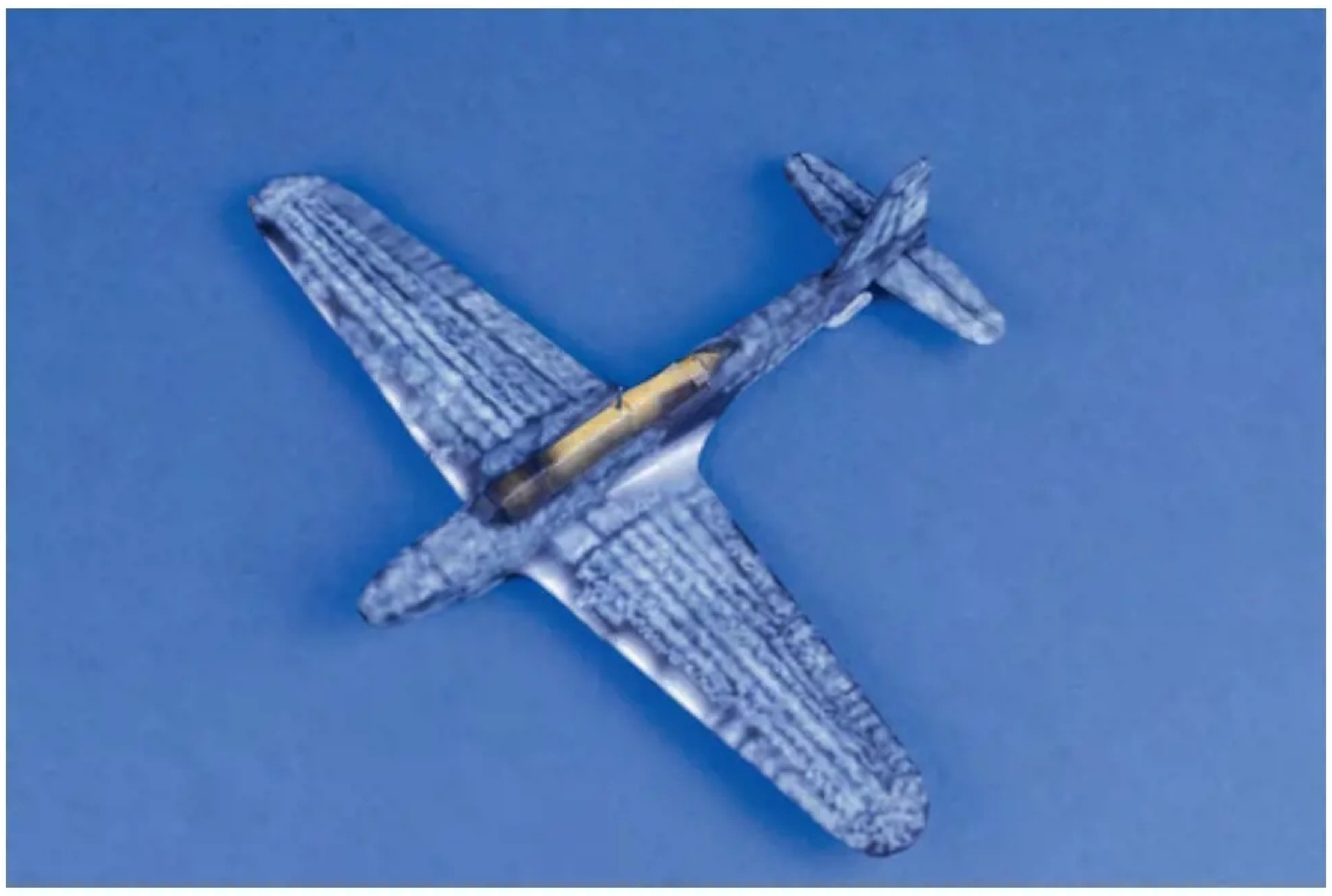
Fortunately, this could be added later via tweezers, Optivisor and a steady hand.

Regarding the gunner's position, Azur-FRROM offers two options: stowed with closed rear canopy, or canopy raised for a deployed gun. At this point the delicate tail wheel must be added as it is sandwiched between the fuselage halves. Next, the panels holding the exhaust stacks were fitted; there are three styles: blank panel, small inlet duct ahead of the exhausts, and covered inlet duct. References are important here, as there are also three types of exhaust. Fortunately, a photo was found for the build subject: L5048/GR-F, 301 (Polish) Squadron, 1940.

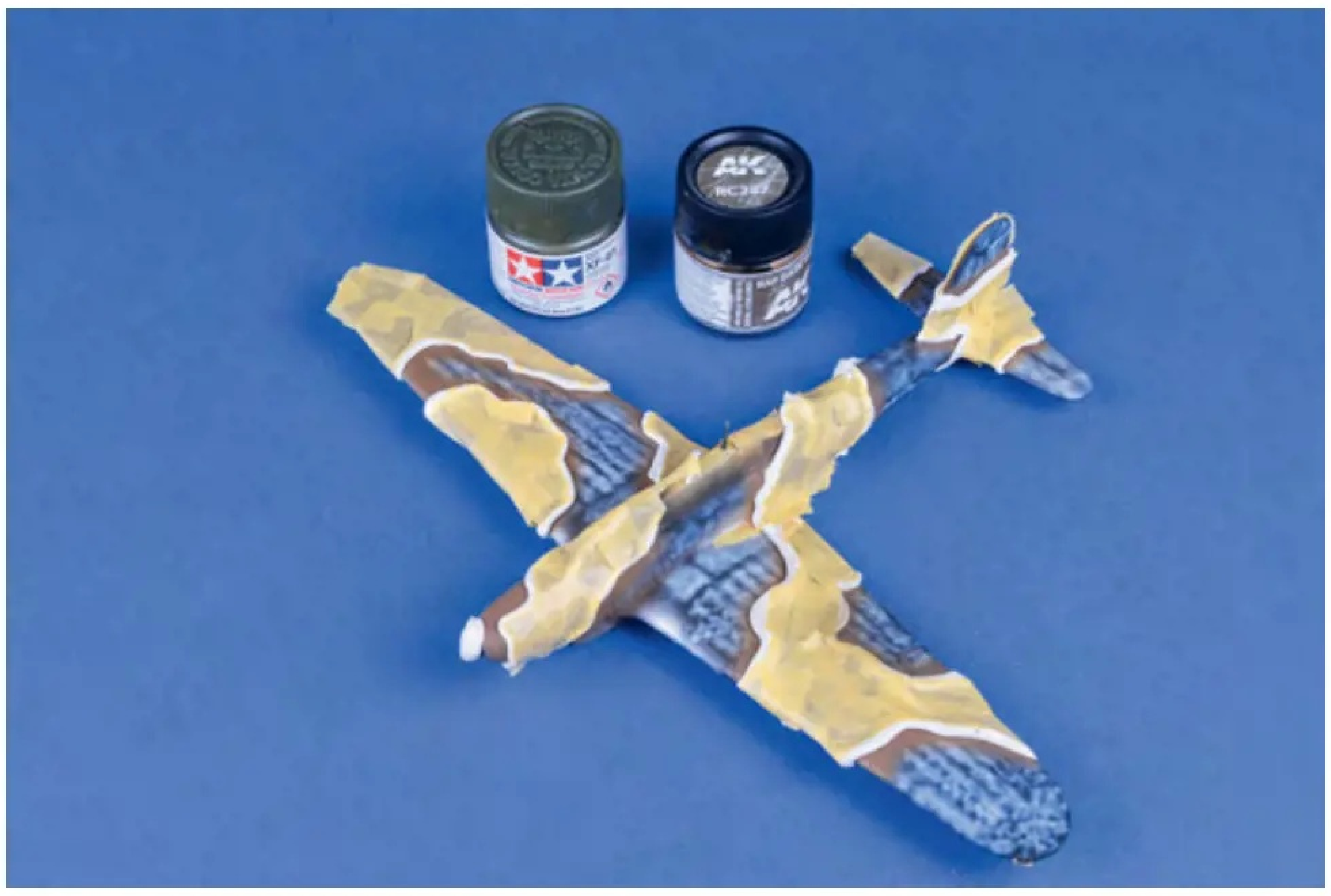
With the fuselage completed, the rudder can then be added. Note, the fabric rib detail on this (and other) control surfaces was the kit's only real disappointment. While the rudder can remain unaltered, the elevators

▶





▲ A tight marbling effect was applied using a Procon PS-770 airbrush with the nozzle cap removed, which allowed for a more intricate pattern and allowed the main panel lines to be left black.



▲ Book references were used when setting the camouflage pattern with White Tack 'worms' – the requisite Dark Earth areas were then covered with Tamiya tape.

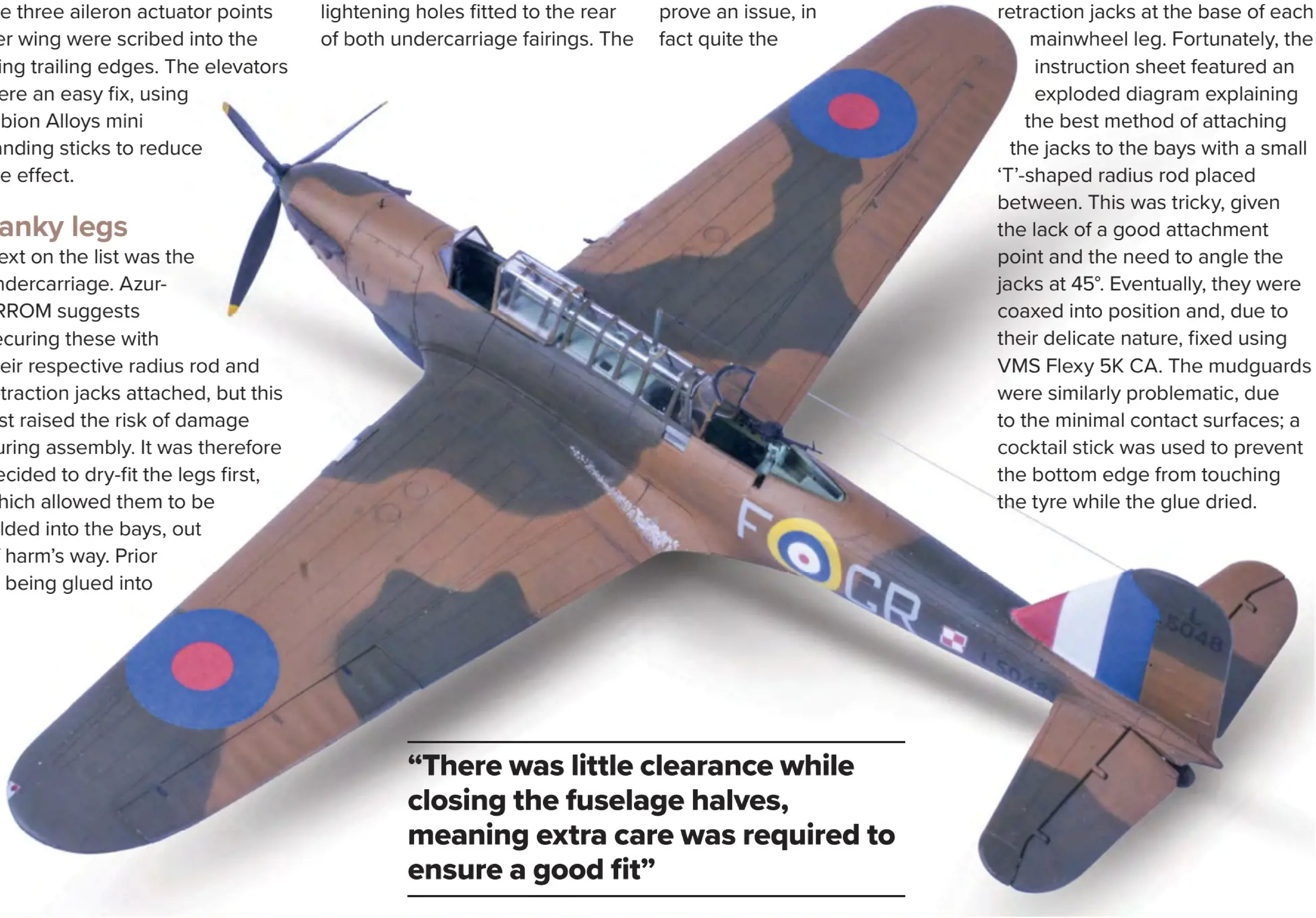
and ailerons require tweaking to resemble the real items more closely. After unsuccessful attempts to sand the ribbed sections, it was decided to use modified parts from the spares bin to replace the ailerons. These were cut to shape, then mounted on the wings and sanded, using increasingly finer Infini abrasive sticks and pads. Following this, the three aileron actuator points per wing were scribed into the wing trailing edges. The elevators were an easy fix, using Albion Alloys mini sanding sticks to reduce the effect.

Lanky legs

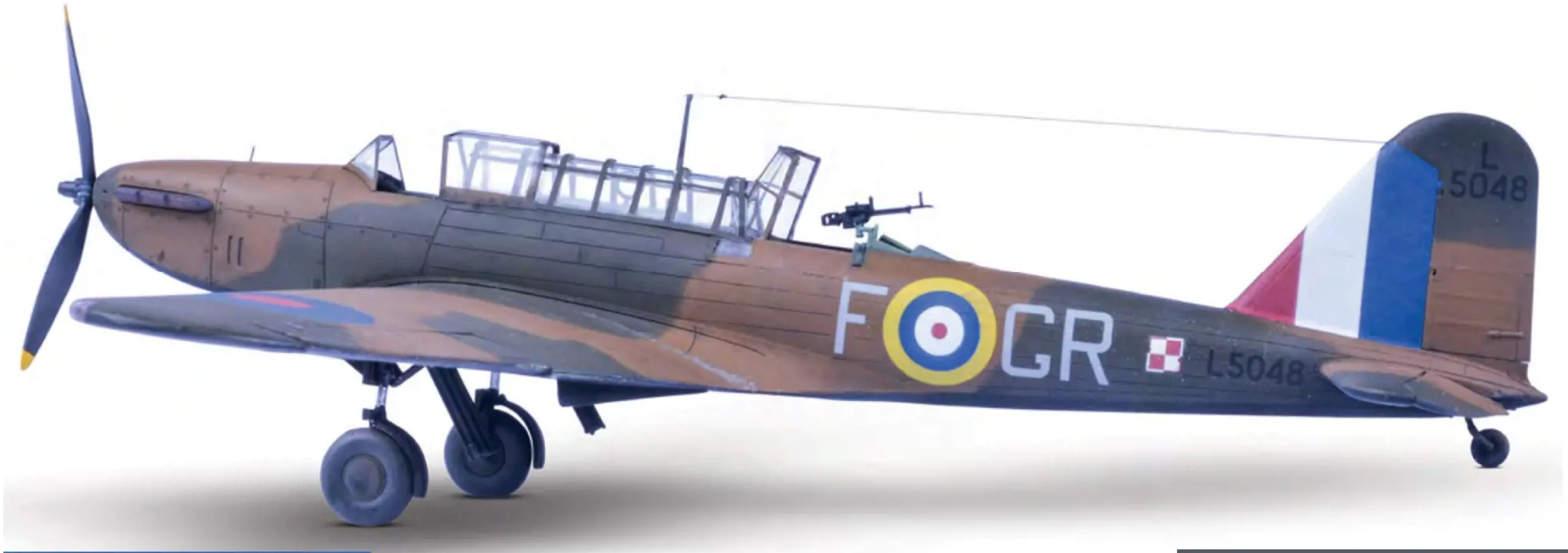
Next on the list was the undercarriage. Azur-FRROM suggests securing these with their respective radius rod and retraction jacks attached, but this just raised the risk of damage during assembly. It was therefore decided to dry-fit the legs first, which allowed them to be folded into the bays, out of harm's way. Prior to being glued into the lower wing, the undercarriage bays received AK488 Matte Aluminium, as did the landing lamp frames. The latter were secured using Ultra Glue PCA, but the kit's clear parts were replaced by Little Cars' (no longer produced) 4mm lenses, as these better represented the lights' reflective appearance. Do not forget to add the small triangular end plates with lightening holes fitted to the rear of both undercarriage fairings. The last item to add before attaching the wings to the fuselage was the clear bomb-aiming 'window' – note this was plated over on some airframes, so it's best to check references.

Azur-FRROM is to be commended for the parts' fit, considering this is essentially a limited-run kit; even the absence of locating pins/holes didn't prove an issue, in fact quite the opposite, as it resulted in a distinct lack of sink marks. The clear landing light covers were added next, and it's important not to omit the small gun in the starboard part. Any ghost seams lines were tackled using Deluxe Materials' Perfect Plastic Putty.

The next stage dealt with the fiddly undercarriage assemblies, which include a pair of long retraction jacks at the base of each mainwheel leg. Fortunately, the instruction sheet featured an exploded diagram explaining the best method of attaching the jacks to the bays with a small 'T'-shaped radius rod placed between. This was tricky, given the lack of a good attachment point and the need to angle the jacks at 45°. Eventually, they were coaxed into position and, due to their delicate nature, fixed using VMS Flexy 5K CA. The mudguards were similarly problematic, due to the minimal contact surfaces; a cocktail stick was used to prevent the bottom edge from touching the tyre while the glue dried.



> **"There was little clearance while closing the fuselage halves, meaning extra care was required to ensure a good fit"**



▲ **In preparation for decaling, a coat of VMS XXL HD Gloss Varnish was airbrushed onto the model.**

The small main gear doors were no easier to attach, but looked excellent when in place.

All that glass

Unfortunately, the wingtip navigation lights are moulded solid, so they were removed using a JLC fine razor saw and neatened with a small flat file. Sections of clear styrene runner were then cut to size and their sides flattened with the file. Next, 0.4mm holes were drilled into one edge to represent the light bulbs, after which X-27 Red and X-25 green was added to the port and starboard holes respectively. These were glued onto the wing and shaped via a fresh scalpel and a 1,000-grade Infini sanding stick. Tamiya's 87070 Compound Finish imparted a gloss sheen, with clarity enhanced via AK-984 Intermediate Gauzy Agent Shine Enhancer.

The kit's Vickers K gun was finely detailed and, once fitted, it was time to install the glazing. No bespoke masking sets were available for this build (*Editor's note: Special Hobby has now released a masking set*), so the tried and trusted method of tape strips was used. I prefer Aizu Micron tape, as it has good adhesive properties and a smooth surface; ideal for replicating canopy framework. Two lengths were prepared and stuck to a sheet of glass before receiving Mr. Finishing Surface 1500 Black; when dry, they were painted MRP-111 Interior Grey-Green. These would be attached to the inner faces of the glazing before it was secured to the fuselage. Exterior strips were also primed, before being sprayed with AK RC287 RAF Dark Earth and XF-81 Dark Green 2 (RAF) as appropriate. These were left on the glass sheet to be used once the topcoats had been applied to the airframe. Care must be taken when masking the three small rectangular windows beneath the gunner's glazing ,as certain airframes (including the subject of this article) had the rear two windows on either side fully plated over.

Bomber shades

Two distinct colour schemes were applied to the Battle during its RAF service. Fortunately, painting was straightforward, as the colour diagrams clearly illustrate the appropriate pattern for each aircraft. Vallejo's Plastic Putty was used sparingly to fill any small seams along the wing root and tailplanes. Following wet sanding, the model was wiped with an isopropyl alcohol-moistened micro-fibre pad to remove any ▶

KIT LIVERIES

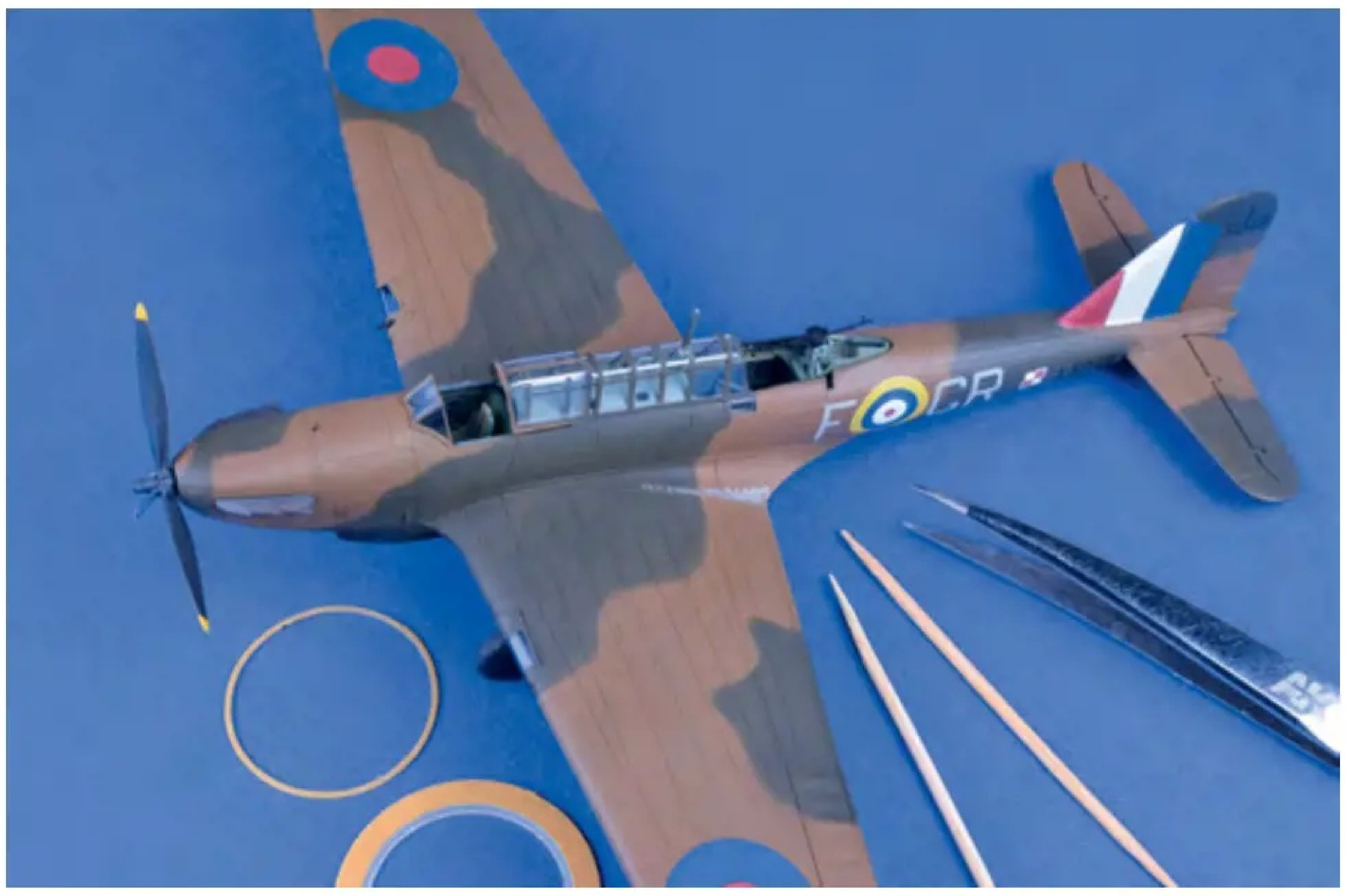
Azur-FRROM provides three markings schemes:

- L5048/GR-F, 301 (Polish) Squadron RAF, UK, August 1940
- K7602/52-B, 52 Squadron RAF, UK, late 1937
- L1837/59, Royal Canadian Air Force, Canada

REFERENCE

Aviation Guide No.1 Fairey Battle, by Ian Huntley (SAM Publications), ISBN: 978-0-953-3465-9-2

▲ **With the deals applied, a further coat of VMS Gloss was applied. The decals were among the best this modeller has ever used, sitting perfectly into the recessed detail without the need for setting solutions.**



▲ **Chipping on the wing roots was replicated with the aid of AMMO's Chipping Effects; once the topcoats had dried, water was added and the paint chipped via cocktail sticks and a stiff brush.**

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

AK Interactive (www.akinteractive.com)
AK-481 Polished Aluminium
AK-488 Matte Aluminium
AK-984 Intermediate Gauzy Agent Shine Enhancer
RC287 RAF Dark Earth

AMMO (www.migjimenez.com)
A.MIG-1407 Engine Grime
A.MIG-2011 Heavy Chipping Effect
A.MIG-2031 Ultra Glue PVA

Deluxe Materials (www.deluxematerials.co.uk)
Perfect Plastic Putty

Mr. Paint (www.mrpaint.sk)
MRP-99 US Navy White
MRP-111 Interior Grey Green (WWII RAF)
MRP-173 Tyre Rubber

Abteilung502 (www.ak-interactive.com)
ABT002 Sepia
ABT005 Smoke
ABT007 Starship Filth
ABT010 Yellow
ABT100 Neutral Grey
ABT165 Faded White

Microscale (www.microscale.com)
Micro Set
Micro Sol

Mr. Color (www.albionhobbies.com)
GX-112 Super Clear UV Cut
Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Black
Mr. Leveling Thinner Rapid

Tamiya (www.hobbyco.net)
XF-19 Sky Grey
X-25 Green
X-27 Red
XF-64 Red Brown
XF-81 Dark Green 2 (RAF)
87070 Compound Finish

residue and dust. Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Black, diluted with Mr. Leveling Thinner Rapid, was used as a primer. A marble coat of MRP-99 US Navy White was then applied through a Procon PS-770 airbrush at an air pressure of approximately 12psi. Panel line areas were left black to act as pre-shading on the upper surface camouflage colours.

As scuffing and scratches were to be reproduced, AK-481 Polished Aluminium was airbrushed along the wing root trailing and wing leading edges. Next, AMMO's A.MIG-2011 Heavy Chipping Effect was airbrushed on the metallic areas and allowed to dry, before the topcoats of XF-81 Dark Green 2 (RAF) and RC287 RAF Dark Earth were applied. The Dark Earth areas were applied first – in light coats – to allow a hint of the marbling to show through. Prior to applying the Dark Green, an HB pencil was used to lightly mark out the camouflage pattern. Soft demarcations were replicated via White Tack 'worms', shaped along the pencilled edges, with Dark Earth areas protected by Tamiya tape.

Weathering was achieved via various Abteilung 502 oils, diluted with ABT-112 Matt Effect Thinner. For the RAF Night undersides, ABT005 Smoke, ABT100 Neutral Grey and ABT165 Faded White were used. Employing the oil dot technique, ABT010 Yellow and ABT002 Sepia were applied to the upper camouflage surfaces to add richer tones to the base colours. Selected panel lines were treated to a heavily diluted wash of ABT007 Starship Filth, with A.MIG-1407 Engine Grime used around the engine covers, fuselage sides, and wing roots.

The undersides were treated similarly; various Wilder and AK pigments being added to replicate mud and dust.

In the absence of a bespoke masking set, Aizu tape was used to replicate the outer frames; this was much easier than conventional masking and the result was pleasing.

Battle honours

Finally, we get a high-quality model of the neglected and much requested Fairey Battle, an important aircraft type that not only served with the Royal Air Force but also with Belgium, Australia, Greece, Turkey, South Africa, Ireland, India, Canada, and the Polish Air Force in Exile (*Polskie Siły Powietrzne*). Azur-FRROM's kit was a joy to build, although, as mentioned, care is needed as several smaller parts are fragile and easily damaged. The panel line detail is subtle, the details crisply moulded, and the fit exceptional, belying its limited-run nature. While the flying surface detail seemed a tad excessive, as illustrated, this can be addressed. The kit also included one of the best decal sheets I have ever used. All in all, this is an excellent offering and comes highly recommended. AMW

"Azur-FRROM is to be commended for the parts' fit, considering this is essentially a limited-run kit"

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NEWS

AIRFIX
1:72 FOCKE-WULF Fw190A-8/F-8

Fans of Focke-Wulf's Fw 190 will welcome the return of Airfix's 1/72 A-8/F-8 kit with new decals for ground-attack units. We also report on a fresh boxing of Azur-FRROM's recent 1/72 Bloch MB 210 bomber, Eduard's new ProfiPACK version of its 1/72 P-51D-5 Mustang, and Exotic Decals' 1/72 captured RAF Wellington and USAAF P-47D markings. Military modellers can read about the new 1/35 3D-printed wheels from Peaks Model, for British World War One armoured cars. Meanwhile, Italeri's 1/32 Macchi MC.205V also comes under the spotlight.

RAUPENSCHLEPPER OST RSO/01
EARLY PROD
SCALE
1:35
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NEW RELEASES AND REISSUES

If you favour French jets, learn all about Modelsvit's new 1/72 Mirage G8.01 – the first styrene kit of the type. MiniArt's debut 1/35 Raupenschlepper Ost/01 Early is appraised in full, as is Great Wall Hobby's new-tool 1/72 A-10C Thunderbolt II, and the Revell reissue of Matchbox's original 1/72 Porsche 917/10. You can also get the lowdown on Hasegawa's limited-edition reissue (with bonus figure) of the Japanese anime-themed Space Wolf from *Space Pirate Captain Harlock*. And maritime fans have a full appraisal of the new 1/350 HMS *Coventry* Type 42 Destroyer by Foreart. Oh, and don't forget X-Scale's new 1/144 P-3C Orion.

BUILD ARTICLES AND TECHNIQUES

Learn new skills via builds of SBS Model's 1/72 Macchi MC.72, the 1/35 Mercedes-Benz L4500A truck with 3.7cm flak from Trumpeter, and Airfix's reissued 1/48 Messerschmitt Bf 109E-3/E-4. There's also MENG's 1/35 FV510 Warrior TES(H), the stunningly detailed 1/72 Me 163B Komet from GasPatch Models, plus Revell's 1/72 F-35A Lightning II, among others.

Curtiss Design 75 Hawk
P-36 and International Derivatives

ACCESSORIES AND REFERENCE

Items from Tyrell Models inspected this month include a highly useful painted parts drying booth and a handle-bending tool. Learn about Eduard's aftermarket upgrades for the aforementioned Italeri MC.205V, along with more 1/72 A-4 Skyhawk decals from Air-Graphic. If it's good reference you seek, get heaps of inspiration from notTOYS.com's *Panzer Camouflage* book... and a timely reissue of European Airlines' hardback on the Curtiss Hawk 75 is also reviewed... plus much more besides.

For more information please visit

www.keymodelworld.com

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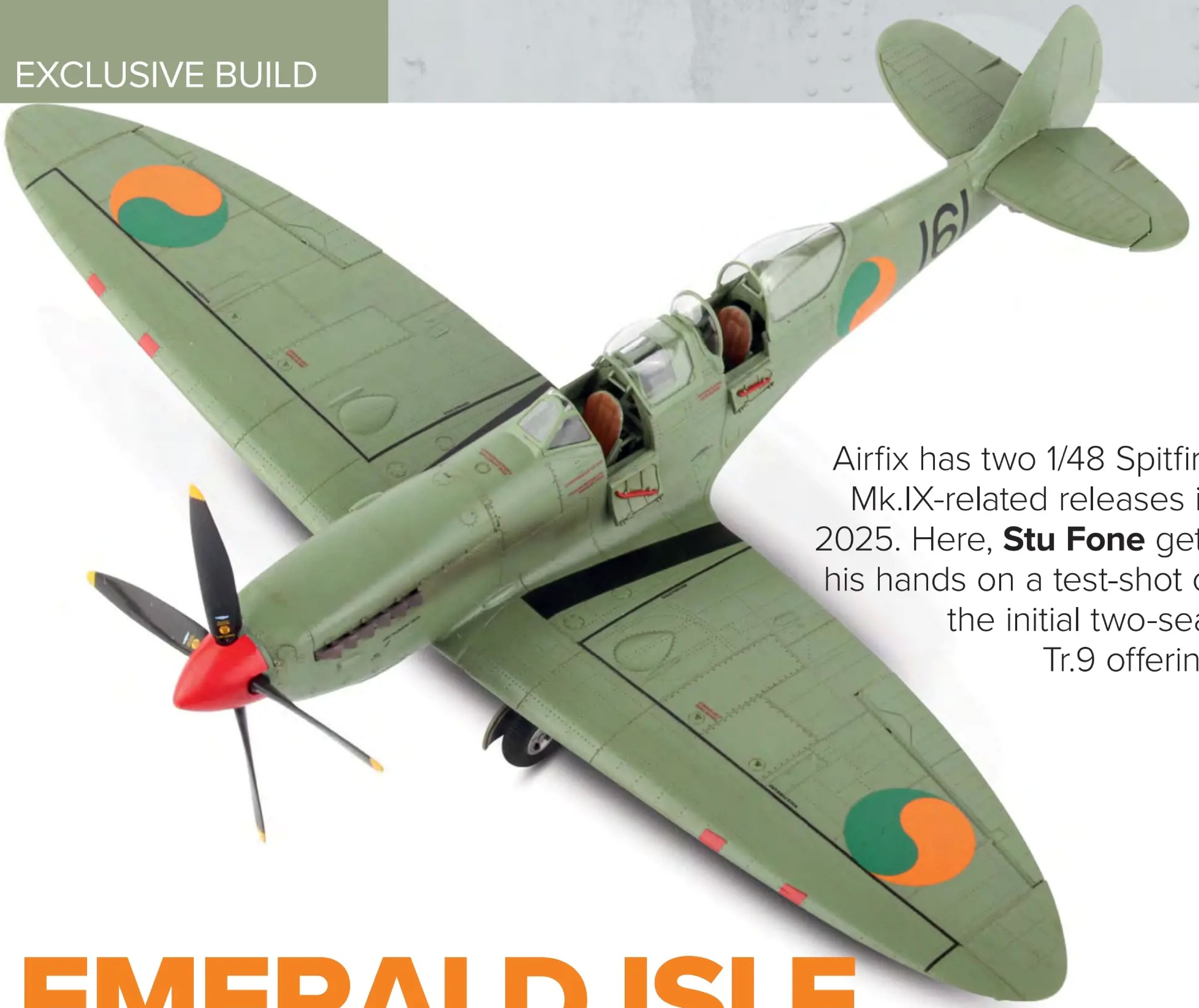
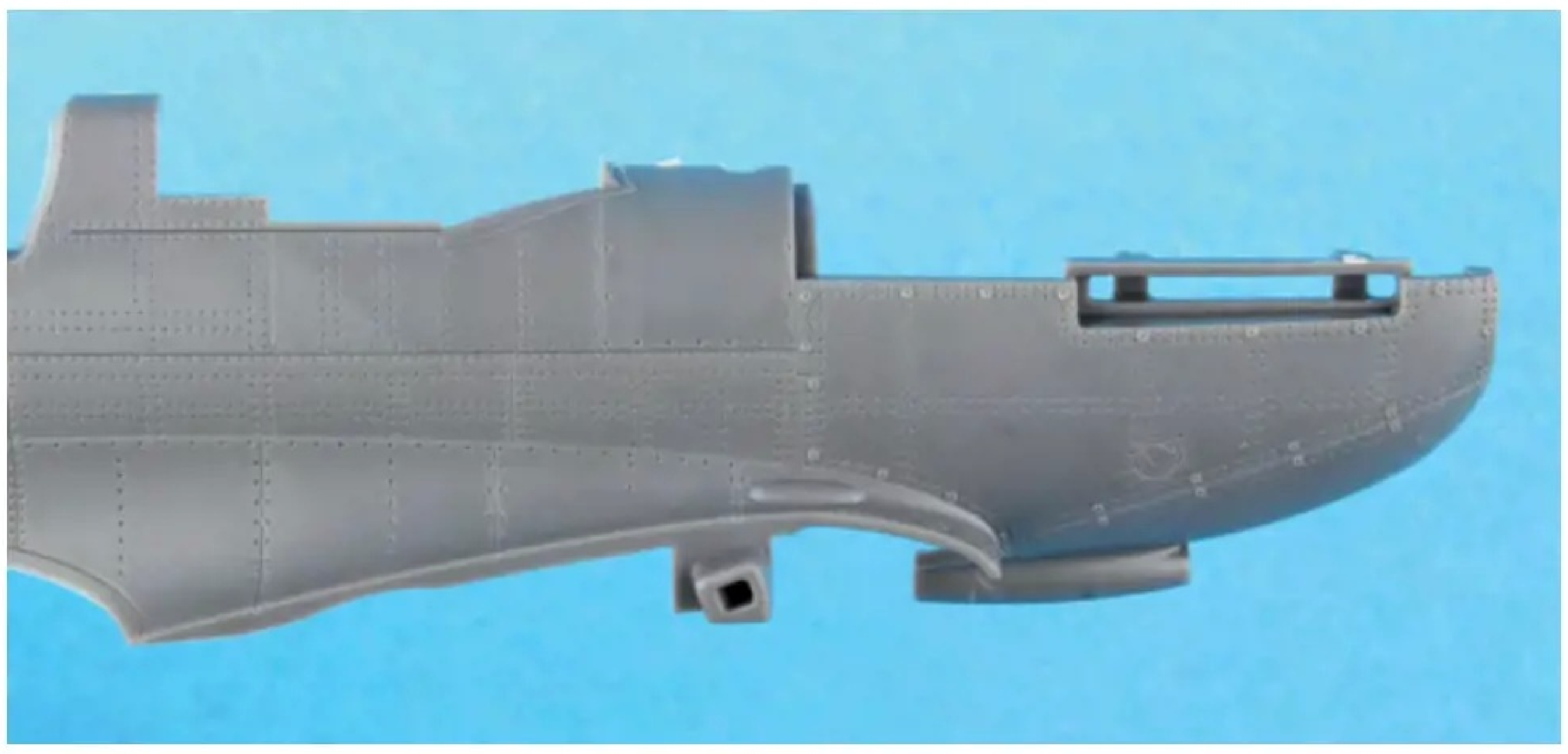


Airfix has two 1/48 Spitfire Mk.IX-related releases in 2025. Here, **Stu Fone** gets his hands on a test-shot of the initial two-seat Tr.9 offering

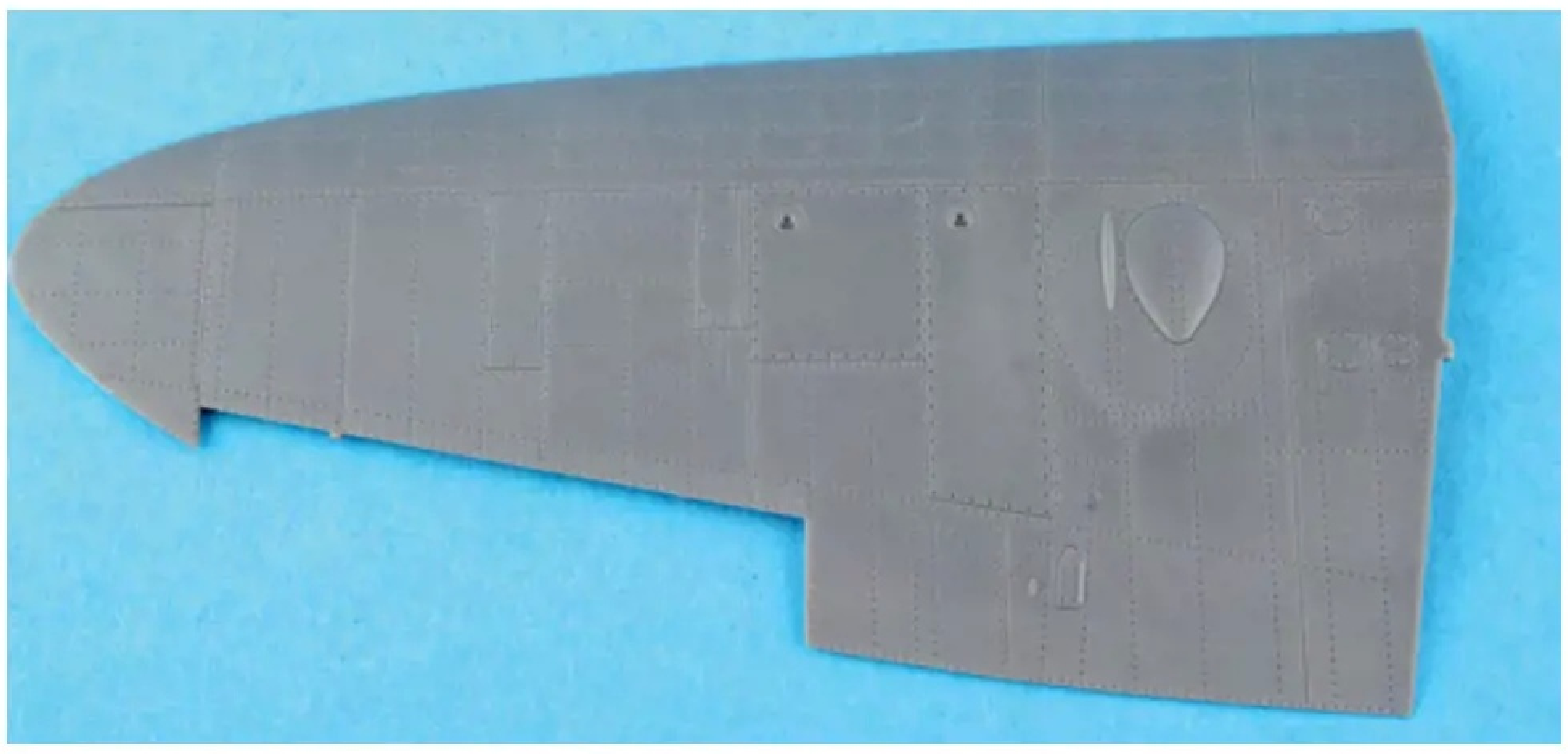
EMERALD ISLE 'TWIN-TUB'

For all the multitude of Supermarine Spitfire kits, regardless of scale, until recently there were just three that depicted the two-seat Tr.9 trainer. None of these were in 1/48, so Airfix's announcement of a new-tool version in January caused quite a stir in the modelling community.

Had there just been a Tr.9 it would have been exciting enough, but there's also a Mk.IXe on the horizon. It seems that kit manufacturers have mirrored the real airframe, as while there were more than 10,000 Mk.IX fighters built during World War Two, the first official dual-seat version flew in 1946, with just 16 (ten



▲ The moulded detail of the fuselage halves is arguably the best to date from Airfix, with recessed rivets and raised fasteners. Note the robust undercarriage attachment point.

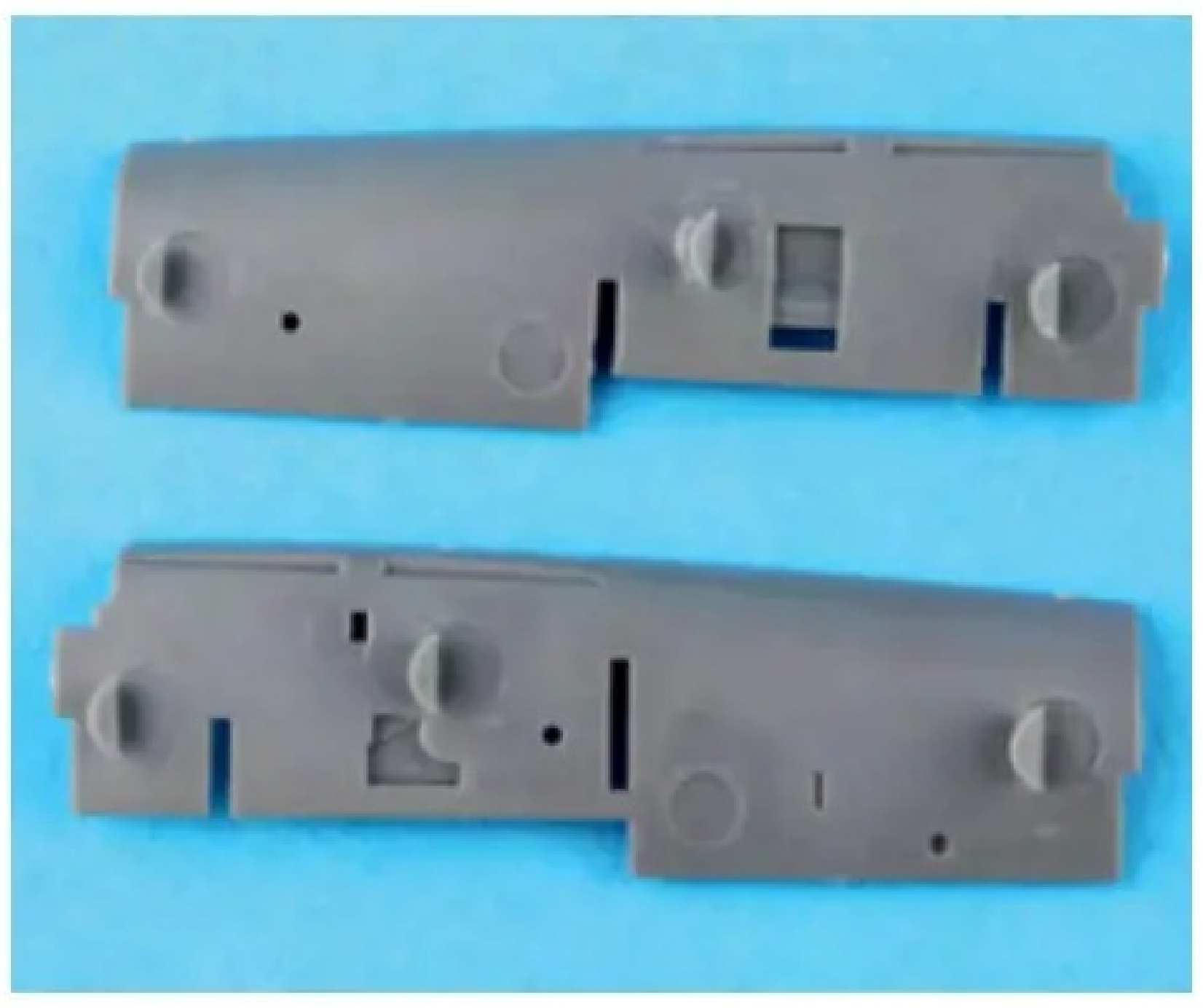


▲ Separate upper wing halves are equally impressive. Note the well-defined inspection hatches plus the undercarriage lowered door (moulded closed).

MODEL SPEC

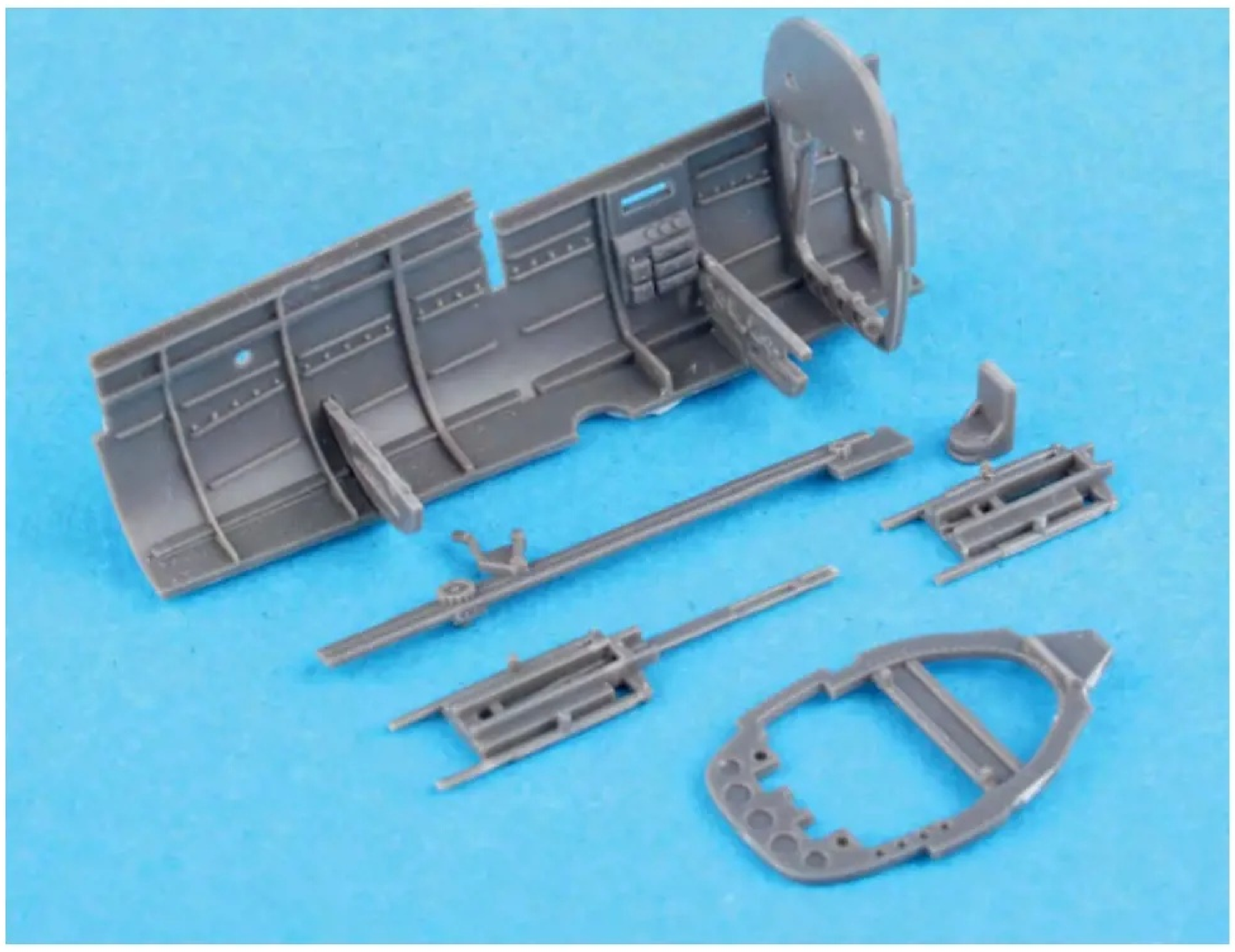
Supermarine Spitfire Tr.9
By: Airfix
Stock Code: A05143
Scale: 1/48
Price: £29.99
Available from:
Airfix (https://uk.airfix.com)

AIRFIX
1:48 SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE TR.9


▲ Ejector-pin release 'towers' must be removed from the rear of each sidewall component.

designated T.IX and six Tr.9, built for India and Ireland respectively) converted airframes. Several of these now venerable machines are still flying, being operated by Warbird companies globally. They are popular both as exhibitors at airshows and also giving passengers the opportunity to experience the thrill of flying in a Spitfire.

Detail step-change


▲ Even partially assembled, the cockpit screams quality. Note the additional rudder pedal mount and extended throttle control inserts.

This build uses a test-shot of the new Airfix kit, so the decals weren't available for part of the project, but otherwise everything else was as per the production offerings. First impressions were overwhelmingly positive; comparison with the firm's previous Spitfire Mk.I and Mk.V parts revealed a huge step-change in the quality of the moulded detail. The new components – which are presented in the newer, dark styrene – feature an abundance of fine, engraved rivets on the airframe, plus crisply rendered panels and raised fasteners – all a quantitative leap in refinement.

One element not present in the new kit is the previous use of two-part undercarriage legs, which have been replaced by a one-piece item. There's also a change to how the undercarriage is attached to the airframe, via a sturdy locating socket moulded integrally with the fuselage instead of being part of the wheel bay. Initial thoughts on this arrangement were dubious, given the potential for misalignment, but in the end it proved a bonus, as the socket also acts to position the upper wing half correctly, negating a common issue with Spitfire kits: the wing/fuselage join.

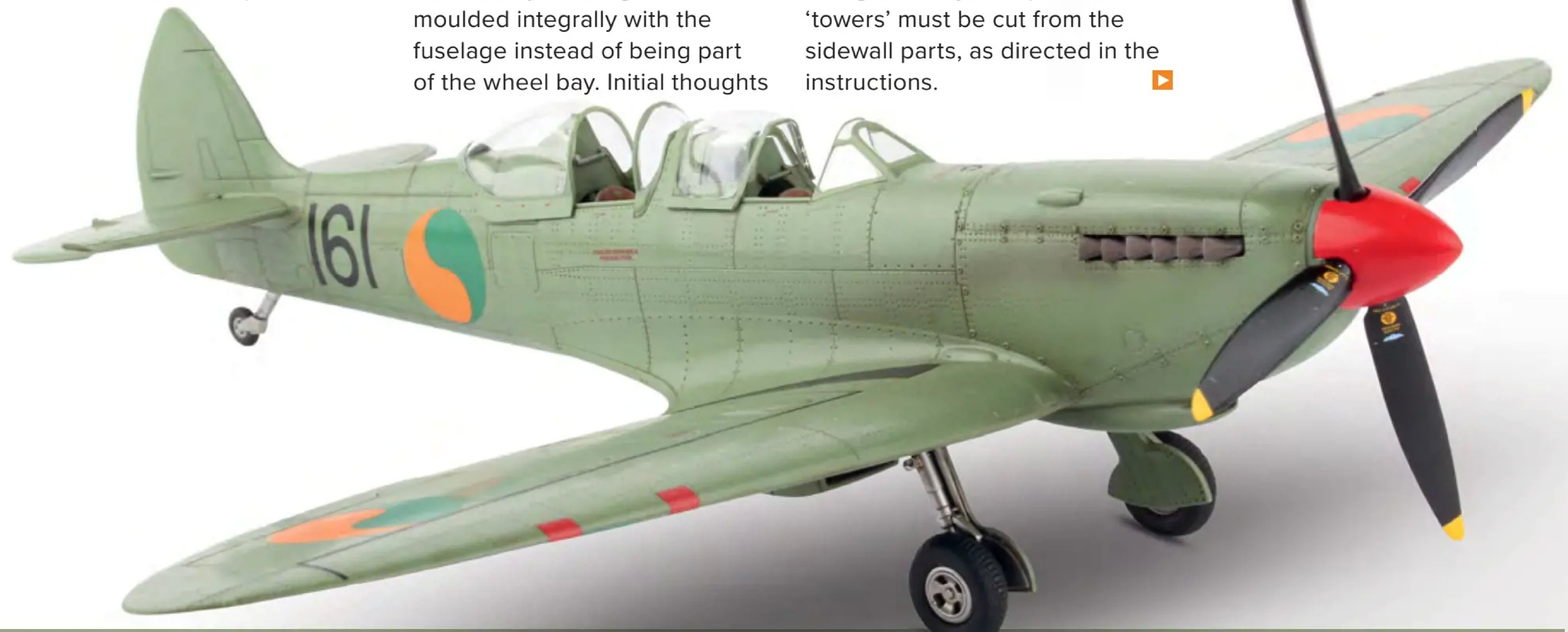
Guess where we start?

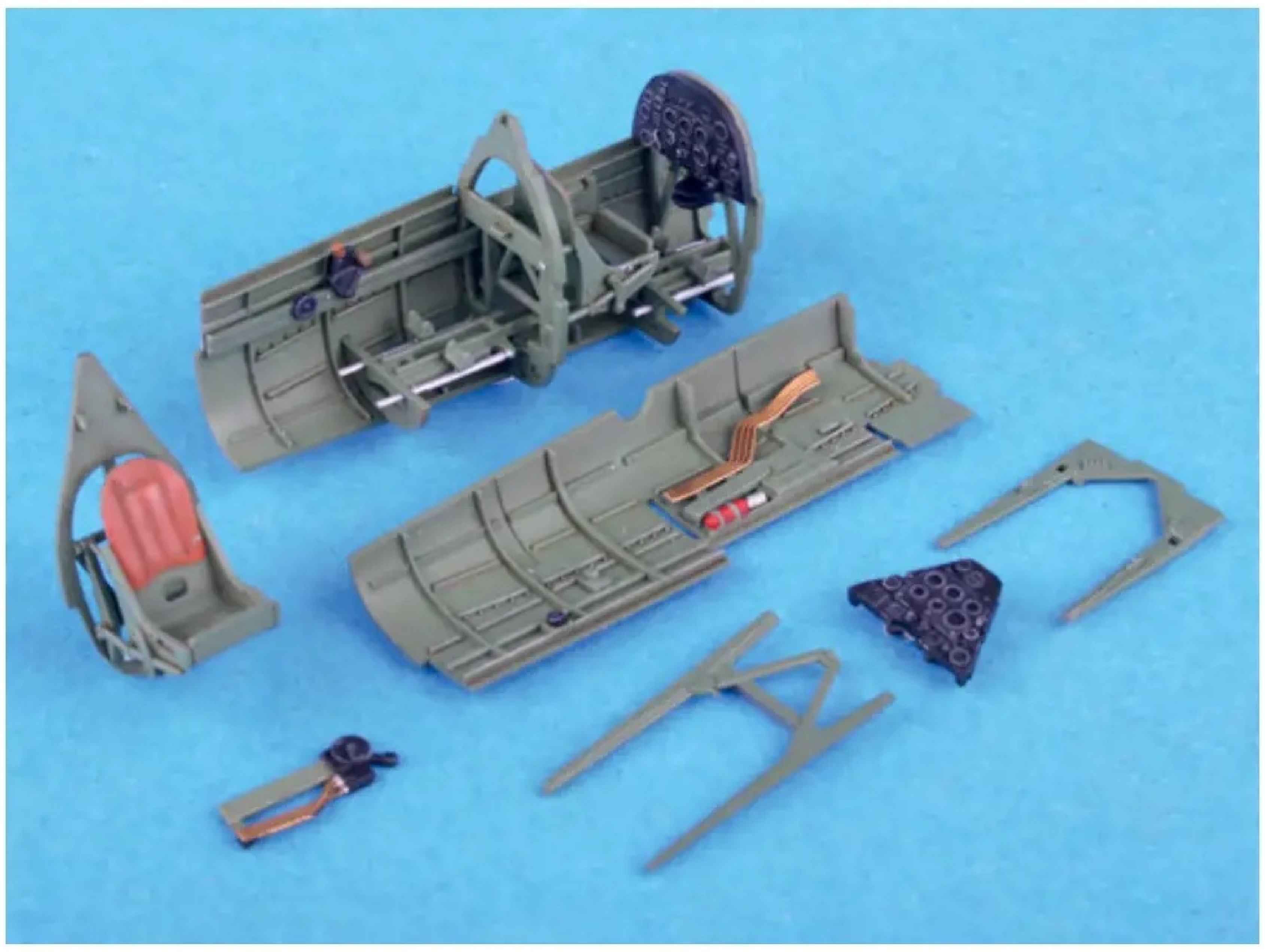
In time-honoured fashion, assembly started with the cockpit. Here, Airfix has chosen to use a similar construction approach as seen on its 1/24 Spitfire Mk.IX and Mk.VIII (this shouldn't be a surprise, as designer Chris Joy is responsible for both). This means there's a cockpit 'capsule' containing partial sidewalls, plus the instrument panels, bulkheads, seats and controls. Note, though, that ejector-pin release 'towers' must be cut from the sidewall parts, as directed in the instructions. ▶

▲ As with its larger 1/24 cousin, the Tr.9 features five-piece seats for the pilot and passenger/trainee.

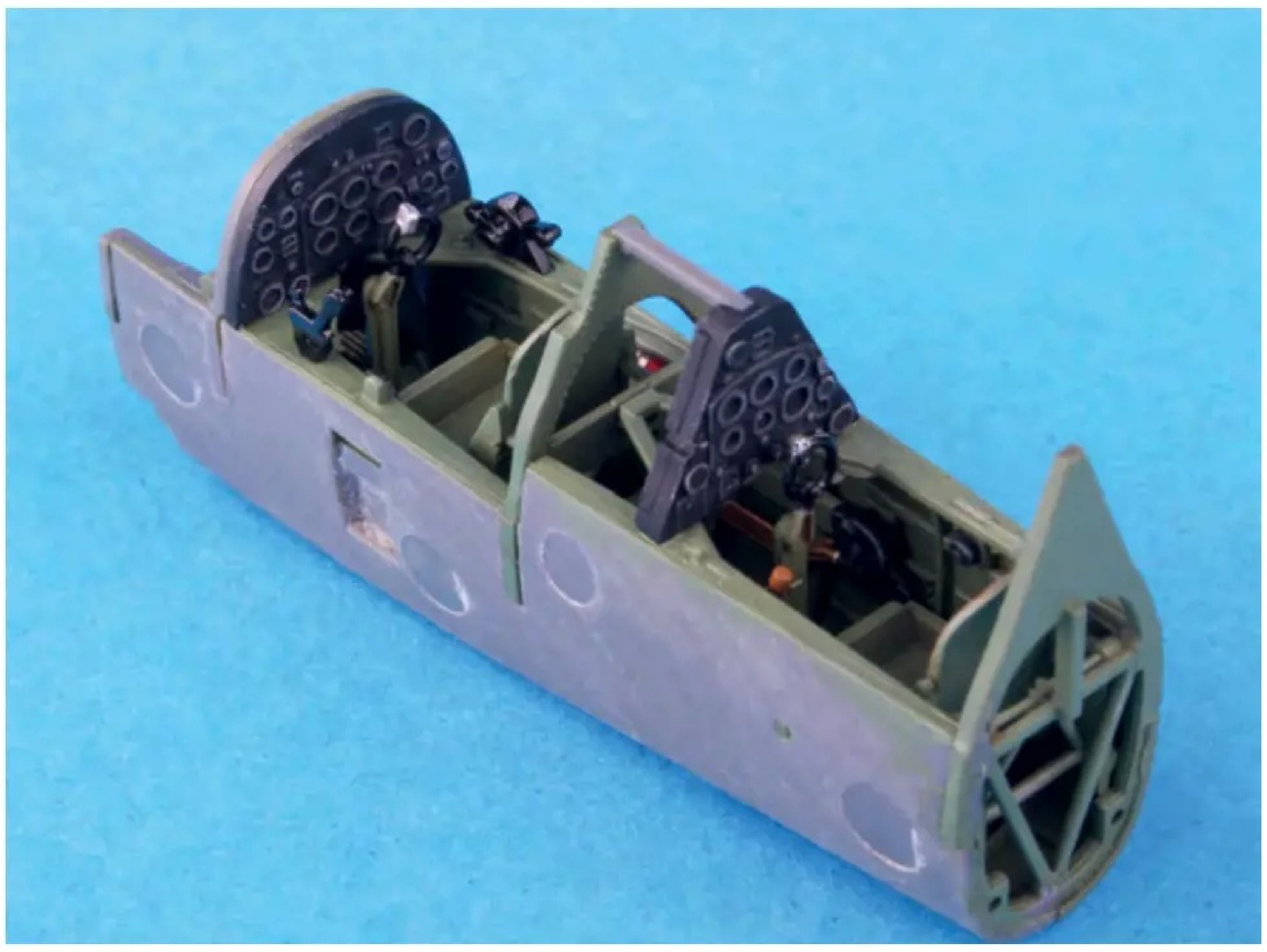
▲ Airfix supplies two crew figures. The initial plan was to include these in the build, but unfortunately there wasn't enough time.

▲ Both instrument panels are well moulded, with raised edges for the dials – the production kit will have decals for these.





▲ Once painted, the cockpit was enlivened considerably. At this stage, the rear cockpit elements have yet to be added.

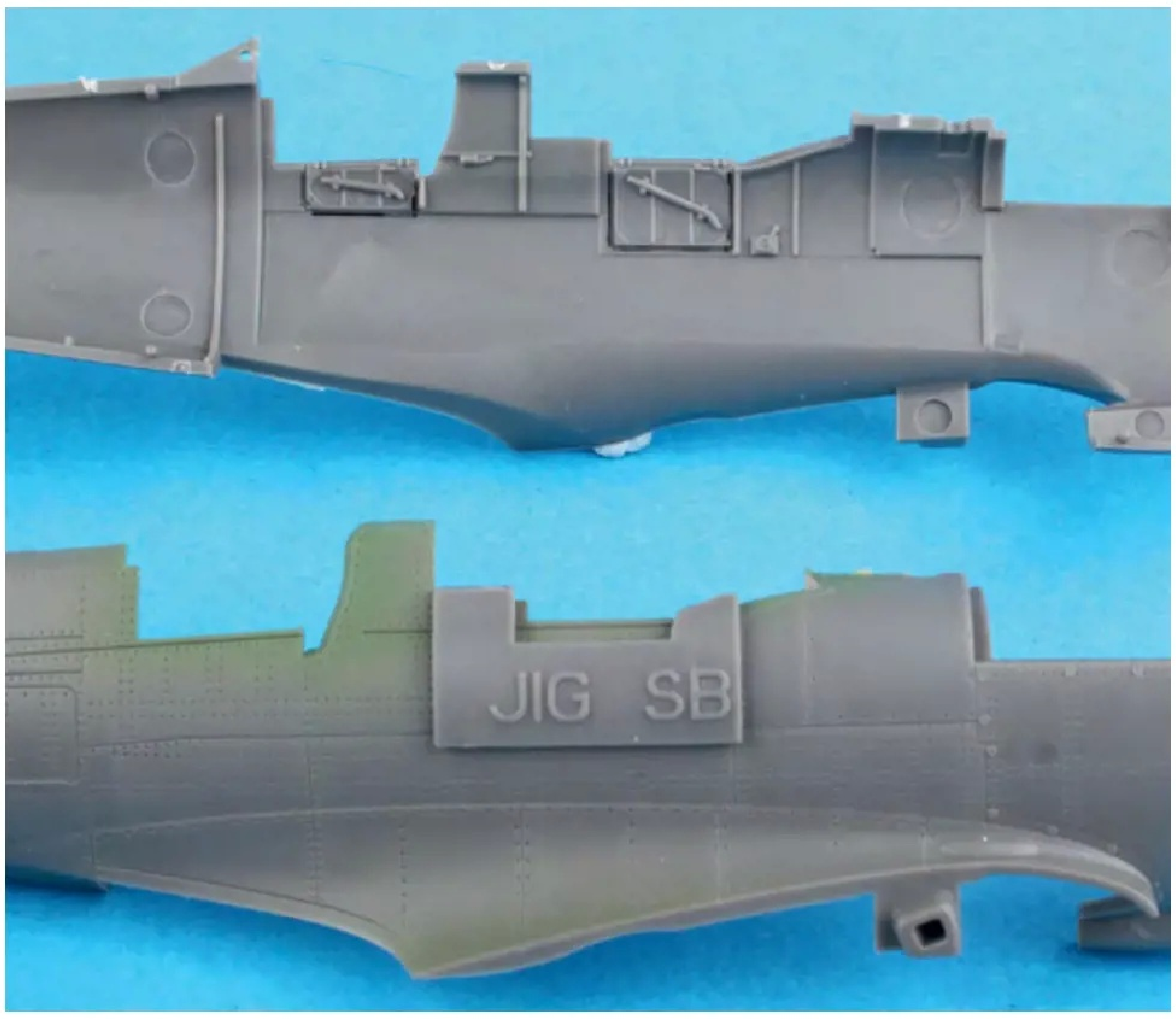


▲ The 'capsule' closed in a satisfying manner, with no issues encountered during assembly.

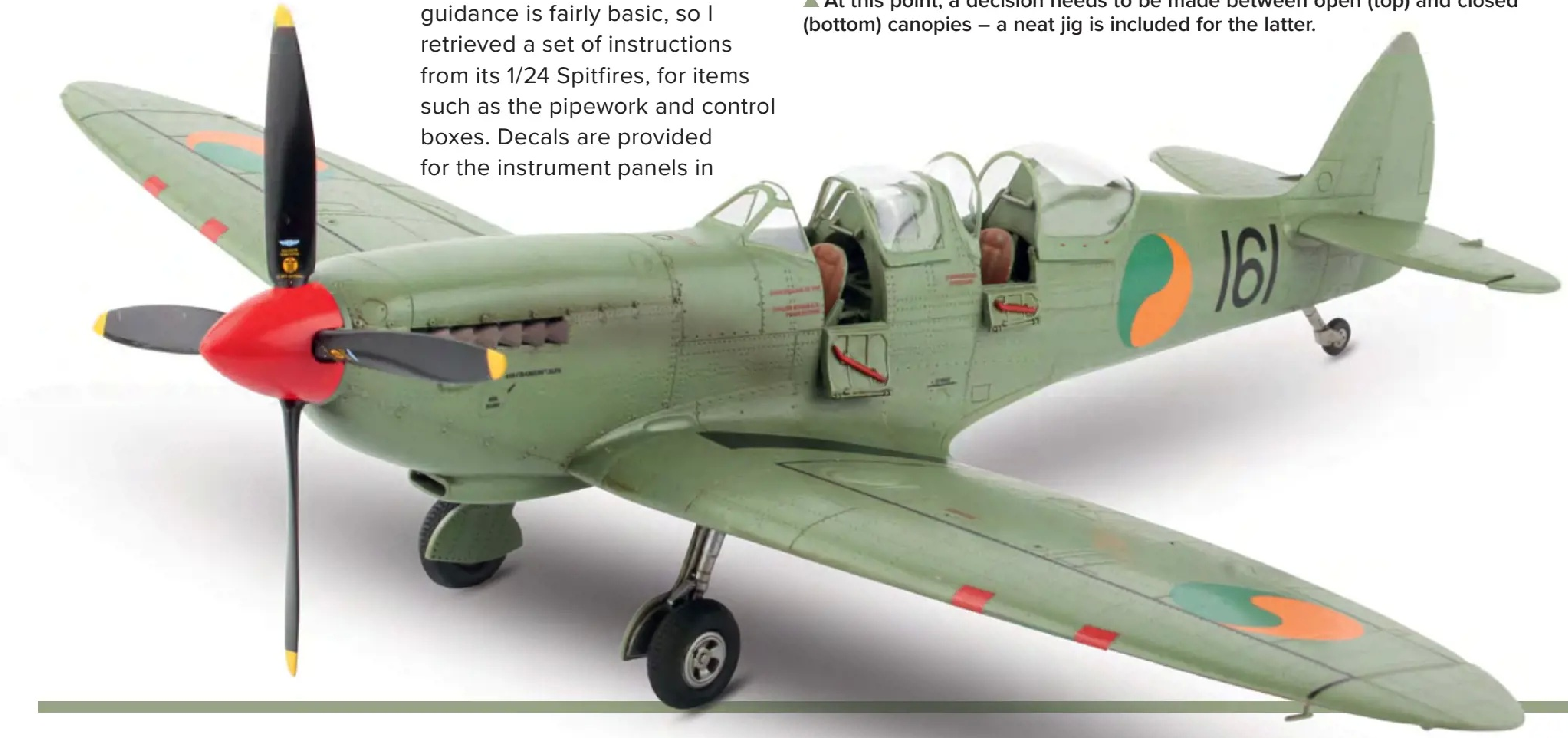
The front cockpit, which resembles a standard 'office' was built first, after which linkages into the rear 'pit were added. Front and rear seats each comprise five parts, with a separate adjustment lever and rear framework adding to their appearance, while the control columns have separate firing grips. Selected bulkheads can then be added. If you're intending to build the model with the canopies closed, then Airfix includes a jig to help remove styrene from the cockpit sill so the front glazing will sit correctly. There's also an option to remove the access doors and this was selected, with a sharp knife and razor saw being employed.

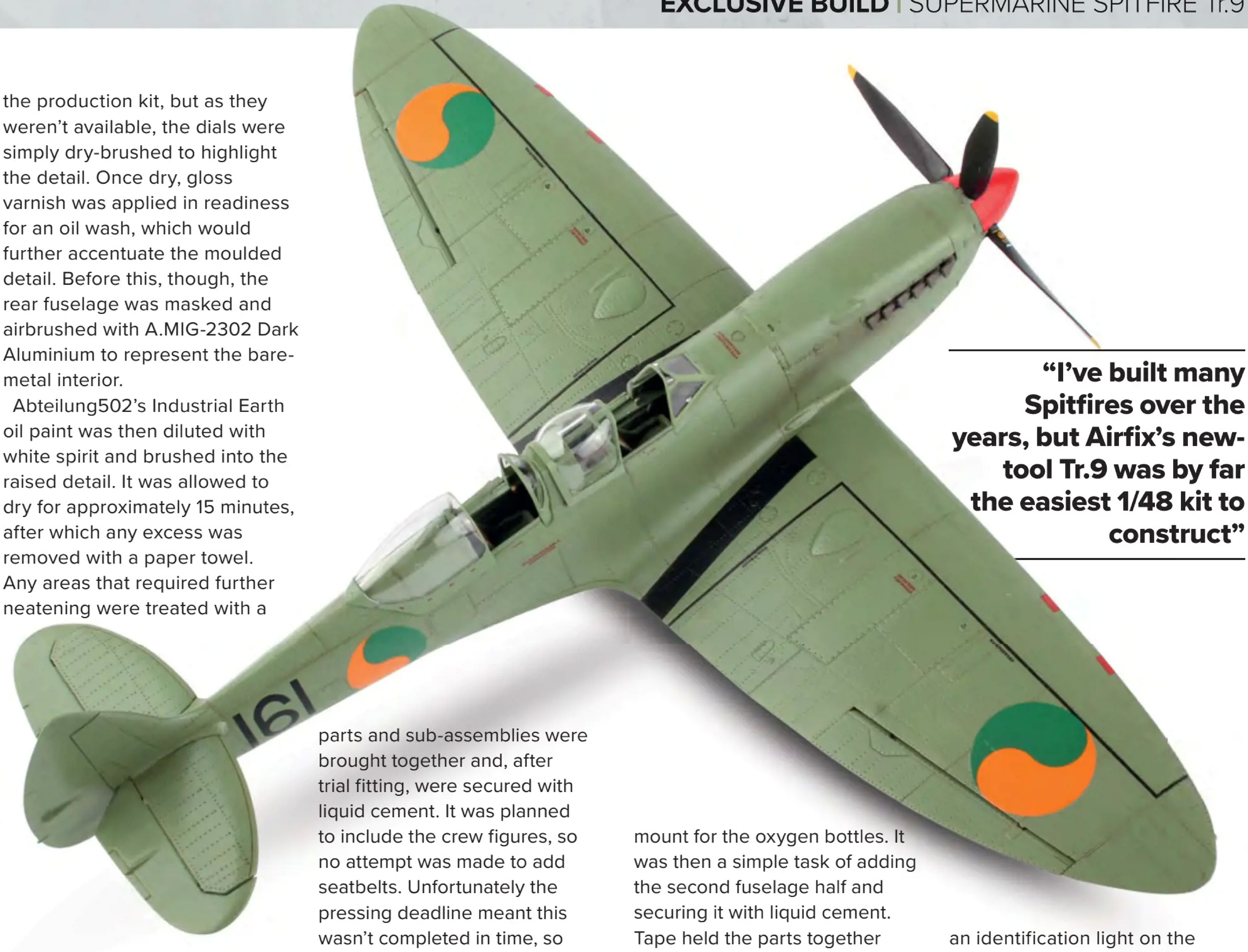
Only at this stage were the paint tins/bottles opened as it was easier to build as much as possible before adding colour. Airfix suggests Humbrol 78 Cockpit Green for the interior, but I opted for my preferred 'go-to', quicker-drying Mr. Color C364 Aircraft Grey Green BS283 lacquer – as time was a factor in this build. As an aside, comparison with a tin of the new Humbrol enamel paint revealed the two were almost identical, which would later prove fortuitous given the chosen scheme.

All items were sprayed Aircraft Grey Green, after which detail was brush painted using various Humbrol, Mr. Color and Vallejo shades. Airfix's painting guidance is fairly basic, so I retrieved a set of instructions from its 1/24 Spitfires, for items such as the pipework and control boxes. Decals are provided for the instrument panels in



▲ At this point, a decision needs to be made between open (top) and closed (bottom) canopies – a neat jig is included for the latter.





the production kit, but as they weren't available, the dials were simply dry-brushed to highlight the detail. Once dry, gloss varnish was applied in readiness for an oil wash, which would further accentuate the moulded detail. Before this, though, the rear fuselage was masked and airbrushed with A.MIG-2302 Dark Aluminium to represent the bare-metal interior.

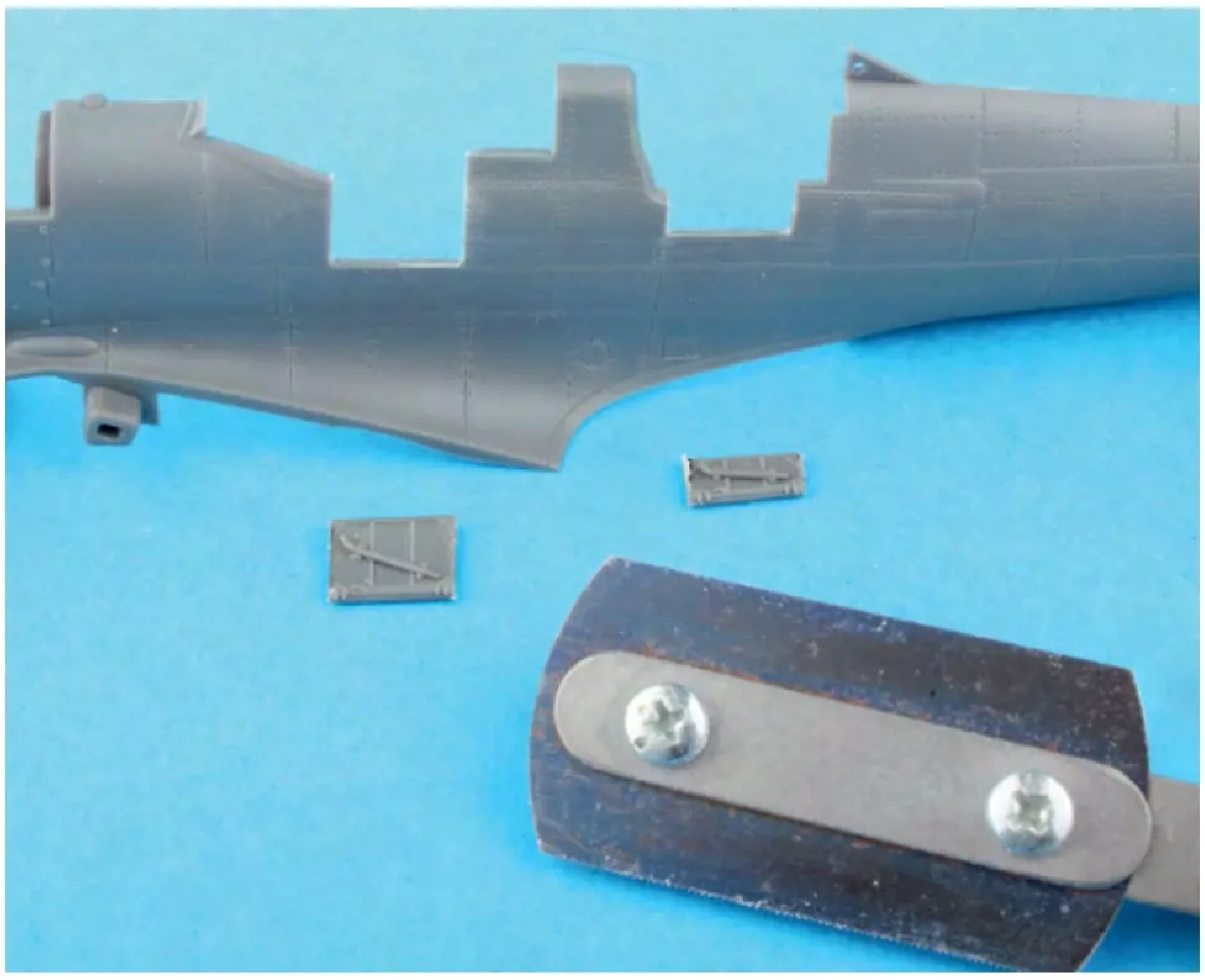
Abteilung502's Industrial Earth oil paint was then diluted with white spirit and brushed into the raised detail. It was allowed to dry for approximately 15 minutes, after which any excess was removed with a paper towel. Any areas that required further neatening were treated with a white spirit-dampened brush, either blending or removing the diluted oil, with the aim being a subtle effect.

> **"I've built many Spitfires over the years, but Airfix's new-tool Tr.9 was by far the easiest 1/48 kit to construct"**

Minimal seams

Once satisfied with the interior's appearance, the various cockpit parts and sub-assemblies were brought together and, after trial fitting, were secured with liquid cement. It was planned to include the crew figures, so no attempt was made to add seatbelts. Unfortunately the pressing deadline meant this wasn't completed in time, so the seats remain as they would appear straight from the box. The result was a neat cockpit capsule, which could then be attached to the right-hand fuselage half, along with two small control levers plus two inserts: the first for the fuel tank cap, while the second was a mount for the oxygen bottles. It was then a simple task of adding the second fuselage half and securing it with liquid cement. Tape held the parts together while everything dried.

Attention then turned to the wings, or rather the one-piece lower wing, which received undercarriage bay liners and an identification light on the interior. Externally, the underwing radiators were assembled – remembering to airbrush the wing where they were located, as it would be difficult to paint ▶

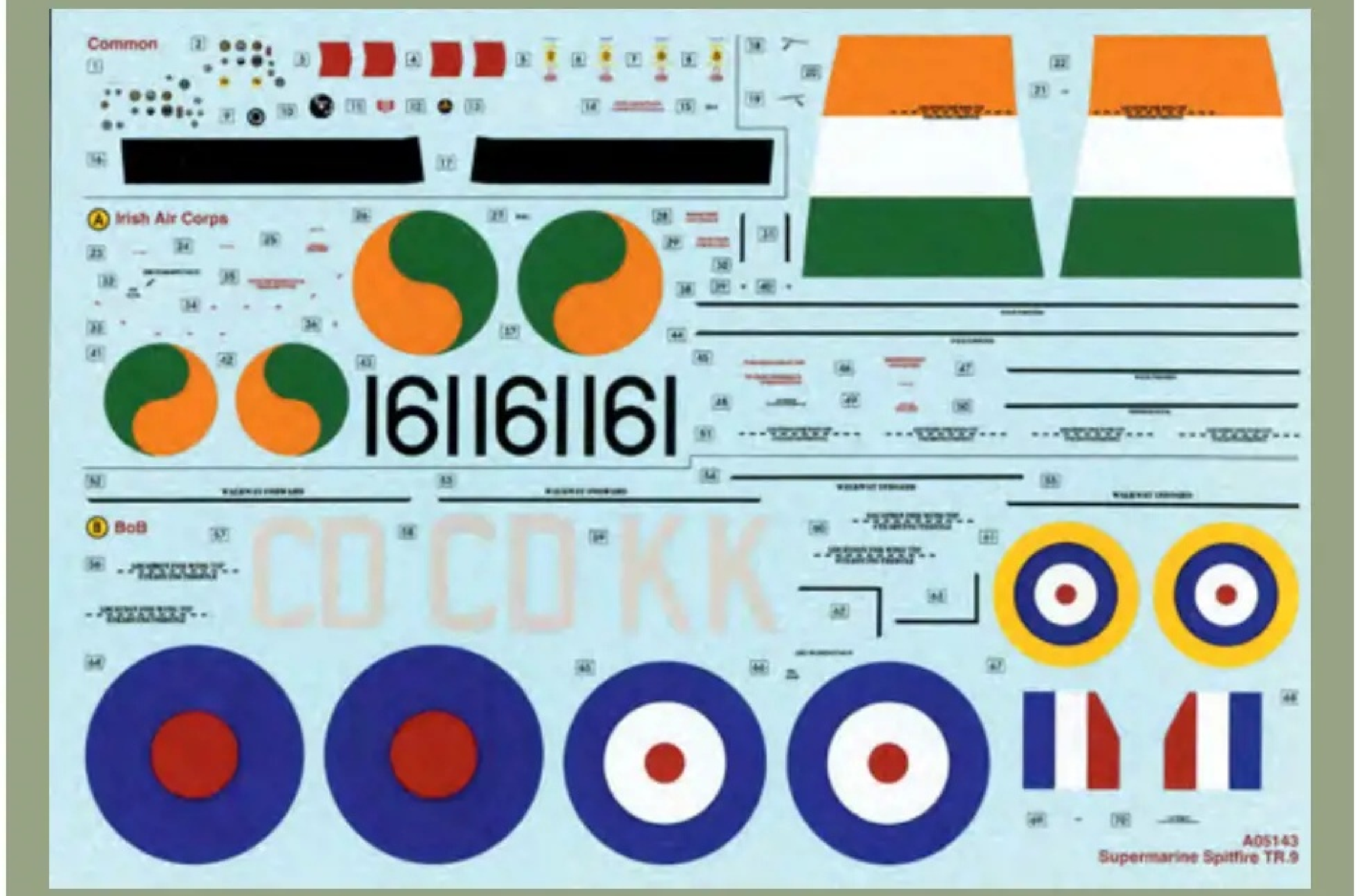


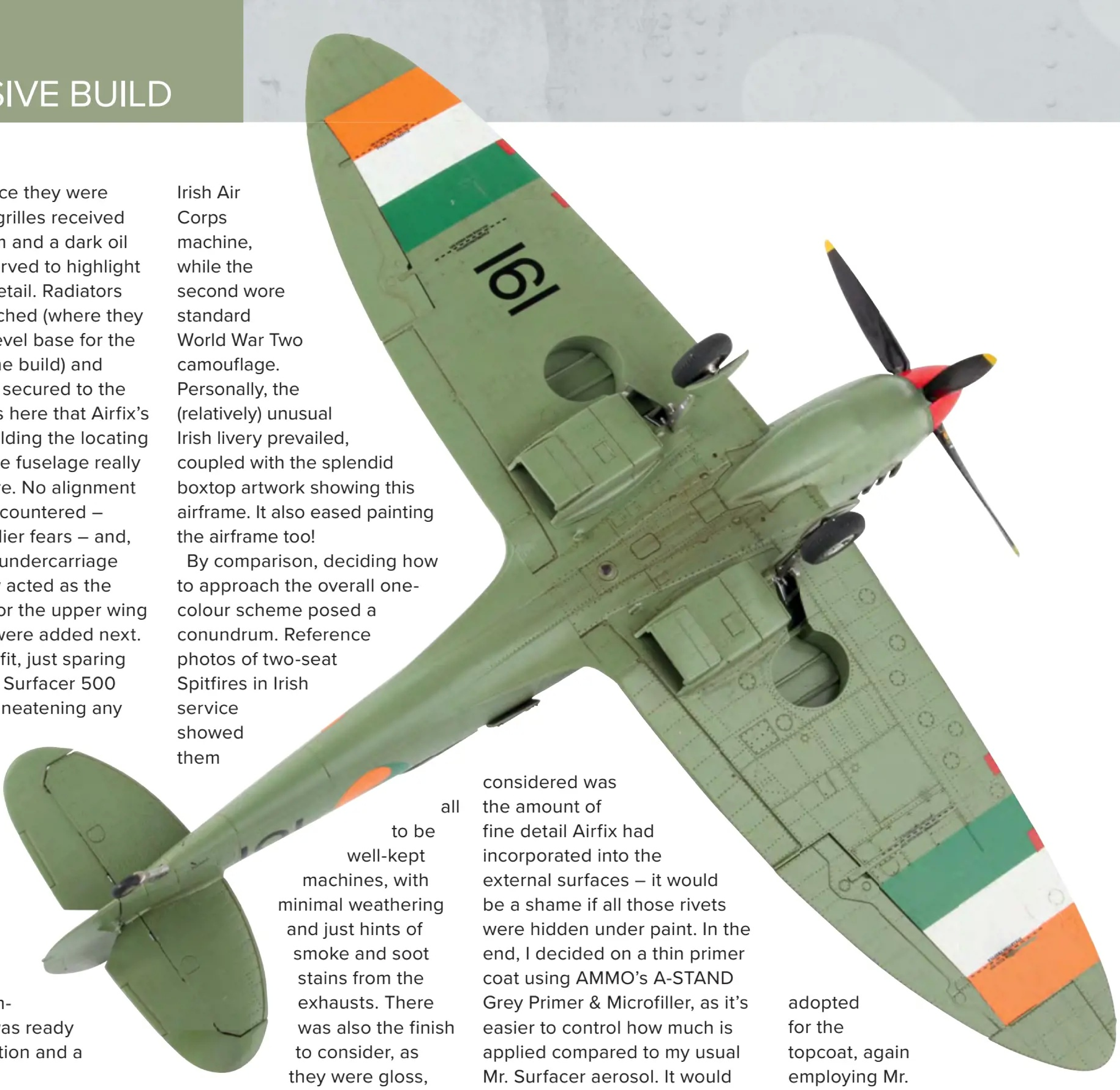
▲ If opting for an open canopy, you can also remove the moulded access hatches. Replacements are provided in the kit.

KIT COLOUR SCHEMES

Airfix has included two markings options on its beautifully printed decal sheet:

- 161, B Flight, Irish Air Corps/An tAechór, Baldonnel Aerodrome, Dublin, Republic of Ireland/Poblacht na hÉireann, 1951
- CD-K, Iver, Buckinghamshire, England, 1969





these areas once they were attached. The grilles received Dark Aluminium and a dark oil wash, which served to highlight the moulded detail. Radiators were then attached (where they would form a level base for the remainder of the build) and the lower wing secured to the fuselage. It was here that Airfix's wisdom in moulding the locating sockets with the fuselage really came to the fore. No alignment issues were encountered – despite my earlier fears – and, along with the undercarriage bay liners, they acted as the ideal spacers for the upper wing halves, which were added next.

Such was the fit, just sparing amounts of Mr. Surfacer 500 were required, neatening any glue smears or places where there had been over-exuberant use of a sanding stick or scalpel. Minor sanding followed, after which the seam-free airframe was ready for final inspection and a coat of primer.

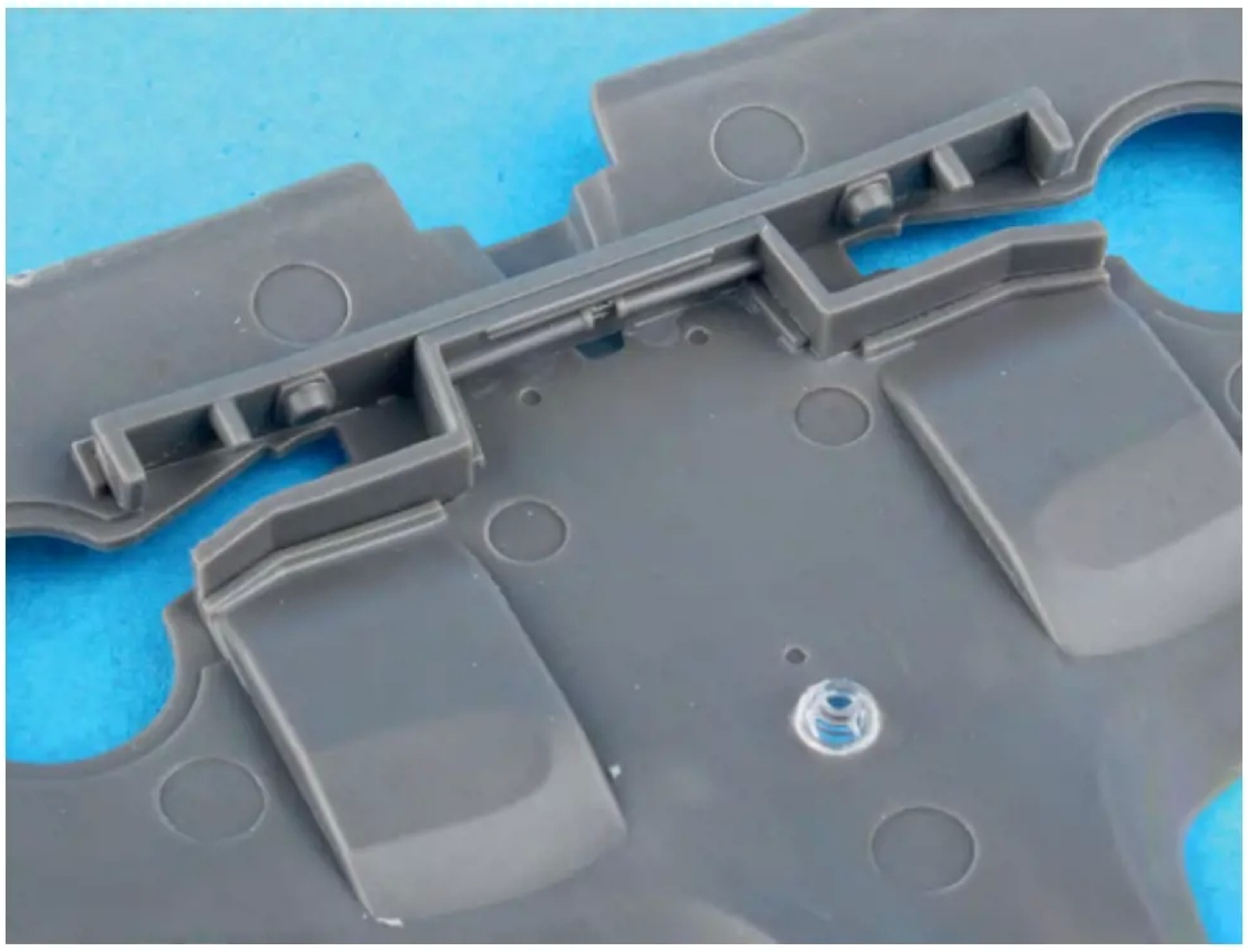
A funny green

When it came to choosing a colour scheme for this project, it was something of a no-brainer. The first was an overall green Irish Air Corps machine, while the second wore standard World War Two camouflage. Personally, the (relatively) unusual Irish livery prevailed, coupled with the splendid boxtop artwork showing this airframe. It also eased painting the airframe too!

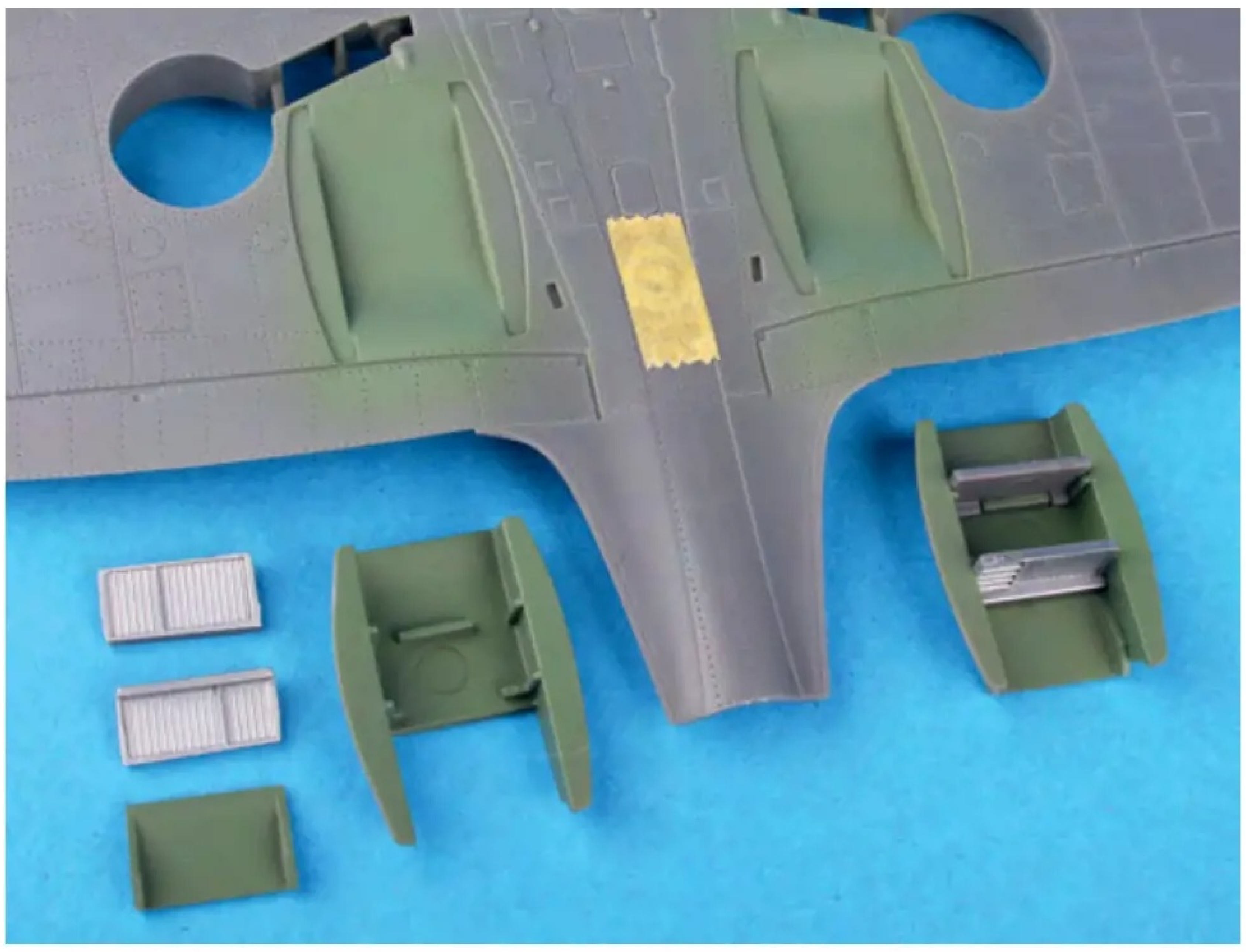
By comparison, deciding how to approach the overall one-colour scheme posed a conundrum. Reference photos of two-seat Spitfires in Irish service showed them all to be well-kept machines, with minimal weathering and just hints of smoke and soot stains from the exhausts. There was also the finish to consider, as they were gloss, and it's always tricky deciding on just how shiny the model should be: too much and it appears toy-like; too little and it fails to emulate the photos.

Another factor that had to be considered was the amount of fine detail Airfix had incorporated into the external surfaces – it would be a shame if all those rivets were hidden under paint. In the end, I decided on a thin primer coat using AMMO's A-STAND Grey Primer & Microfiller, as it's easier to control how much is applied compared to my usual Mr. Surfacer aerosol. It would also enable me to vary to the colour depth, in effect acting as a pre-shade, as the lighter coat would mean that little, if any, primer would fill the panel lines.

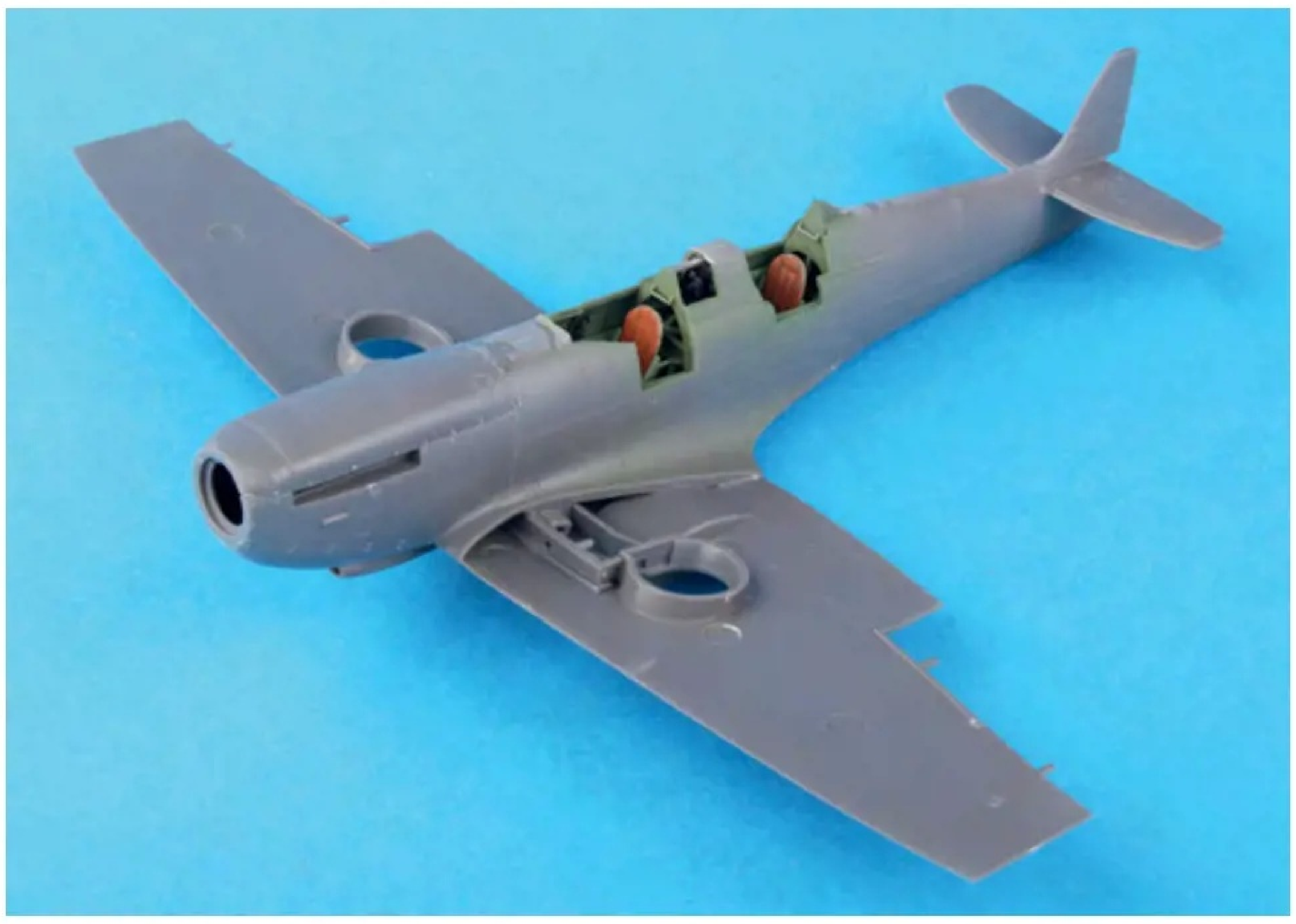
A similar approach was then adopted for the topcoat, again employing Mr. Color's Aircraft Grey Green as I couldn't afford to wait several days for an enamel coat to cure properly. Instead of a general application, I worked across the wings and fuselage



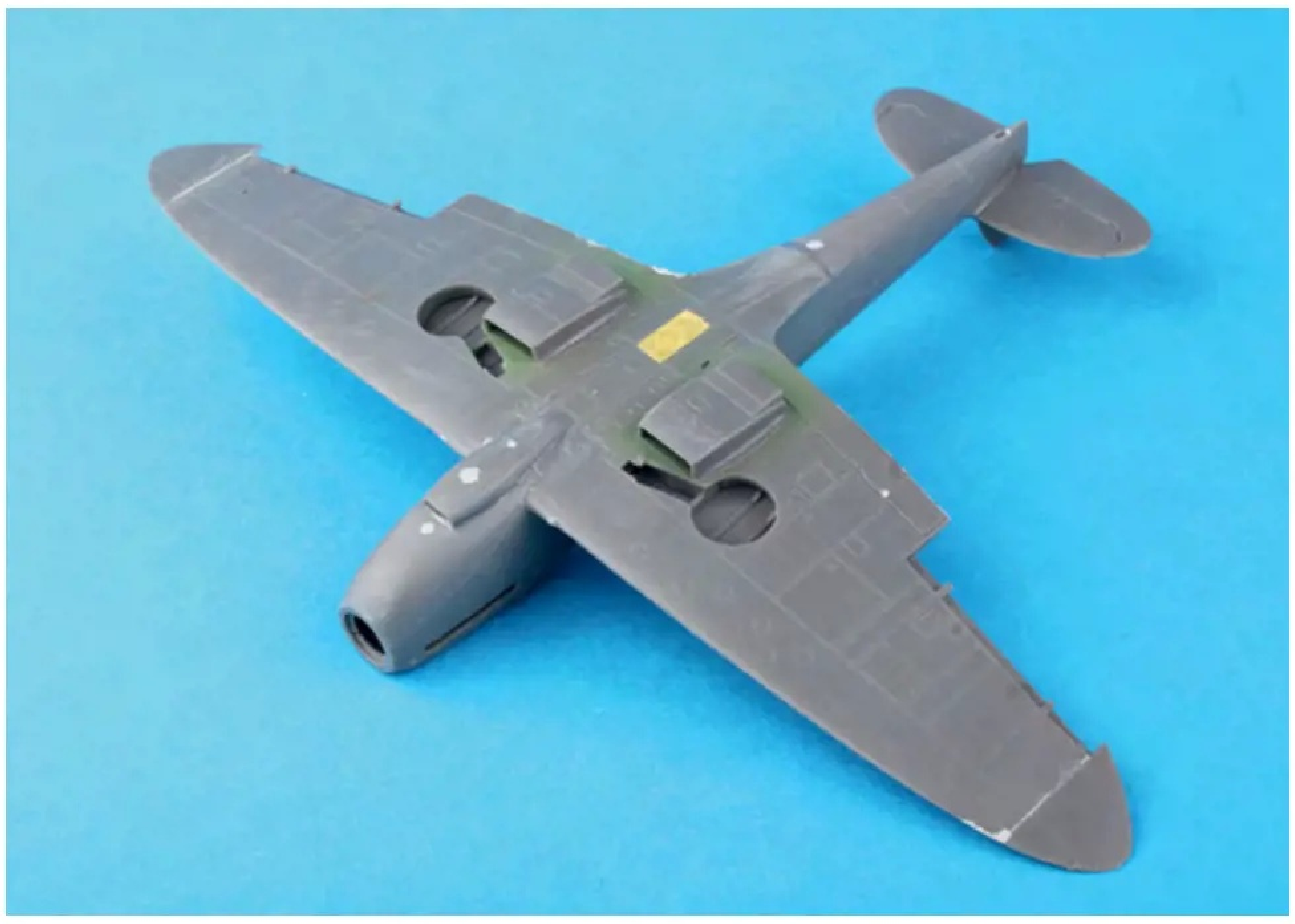
▲ Two spar sections replicate most of the undercarriage bays, while a further insert on each side provides the remainder.



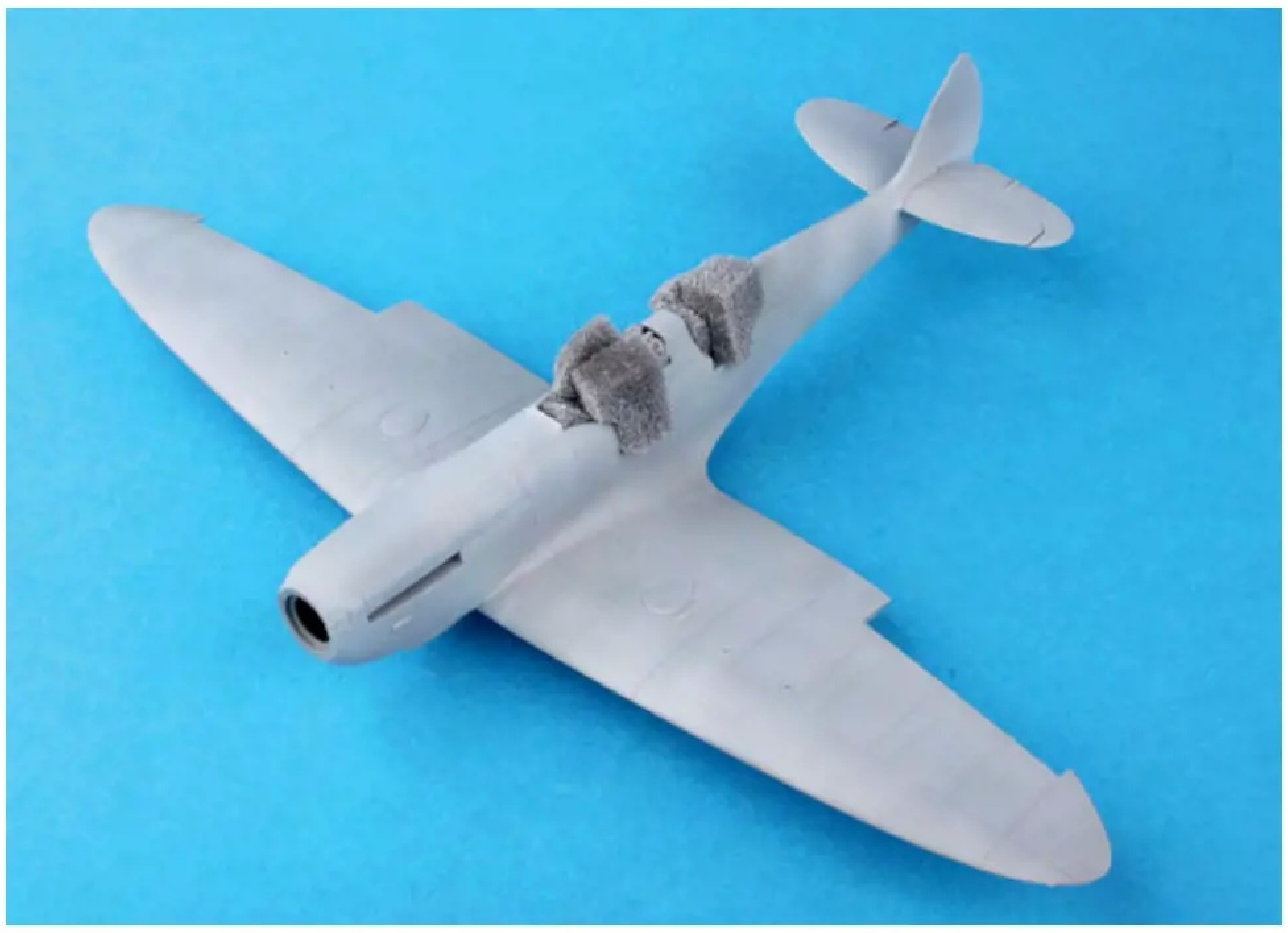
▲ Remember to paint the wings with the interior colour prior to attaching the completed radiators.



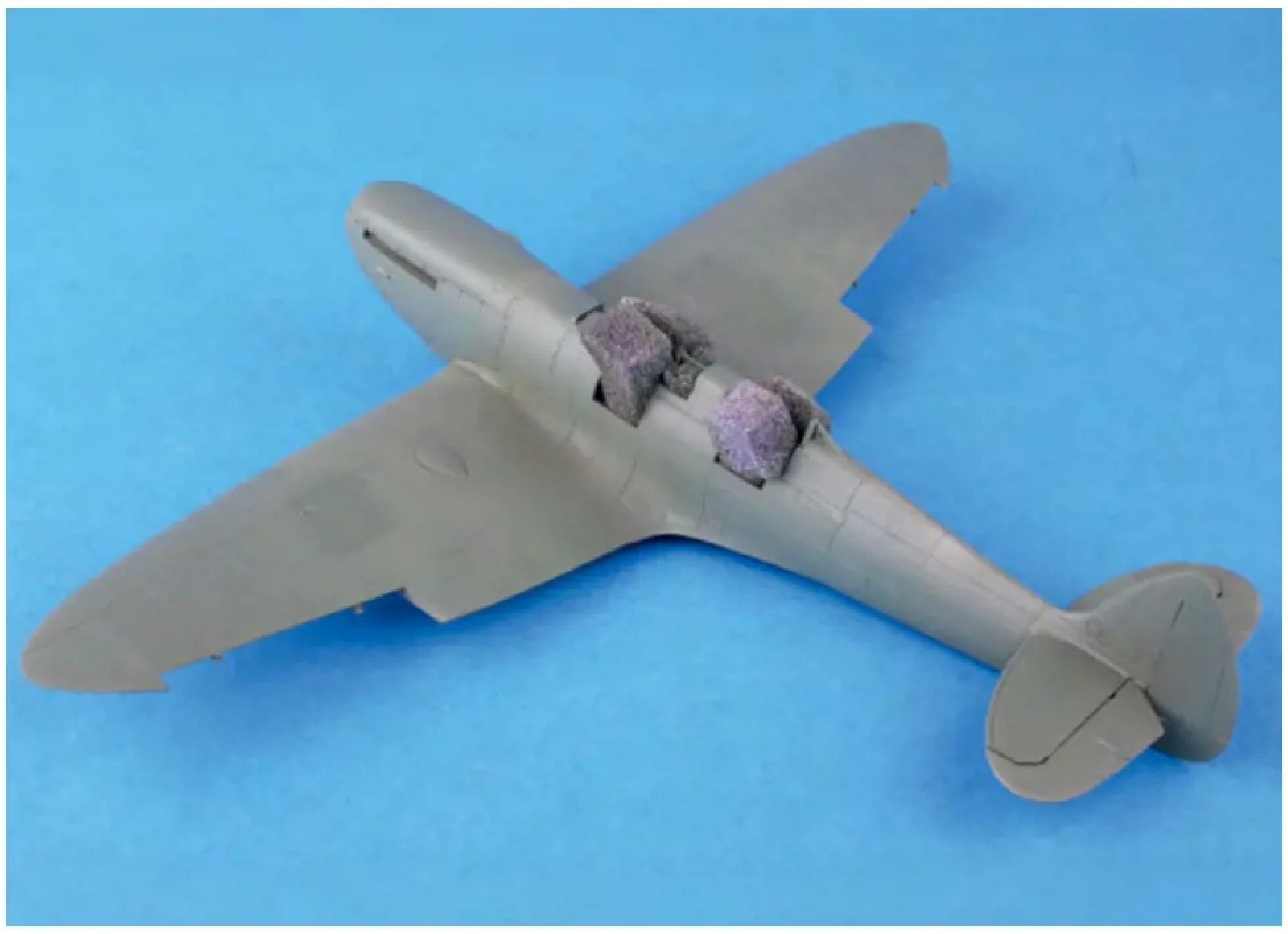
▲ The fuselage joined together without issue, as did the lower wing. Note how the undercarriage location socket fits neatly in place.



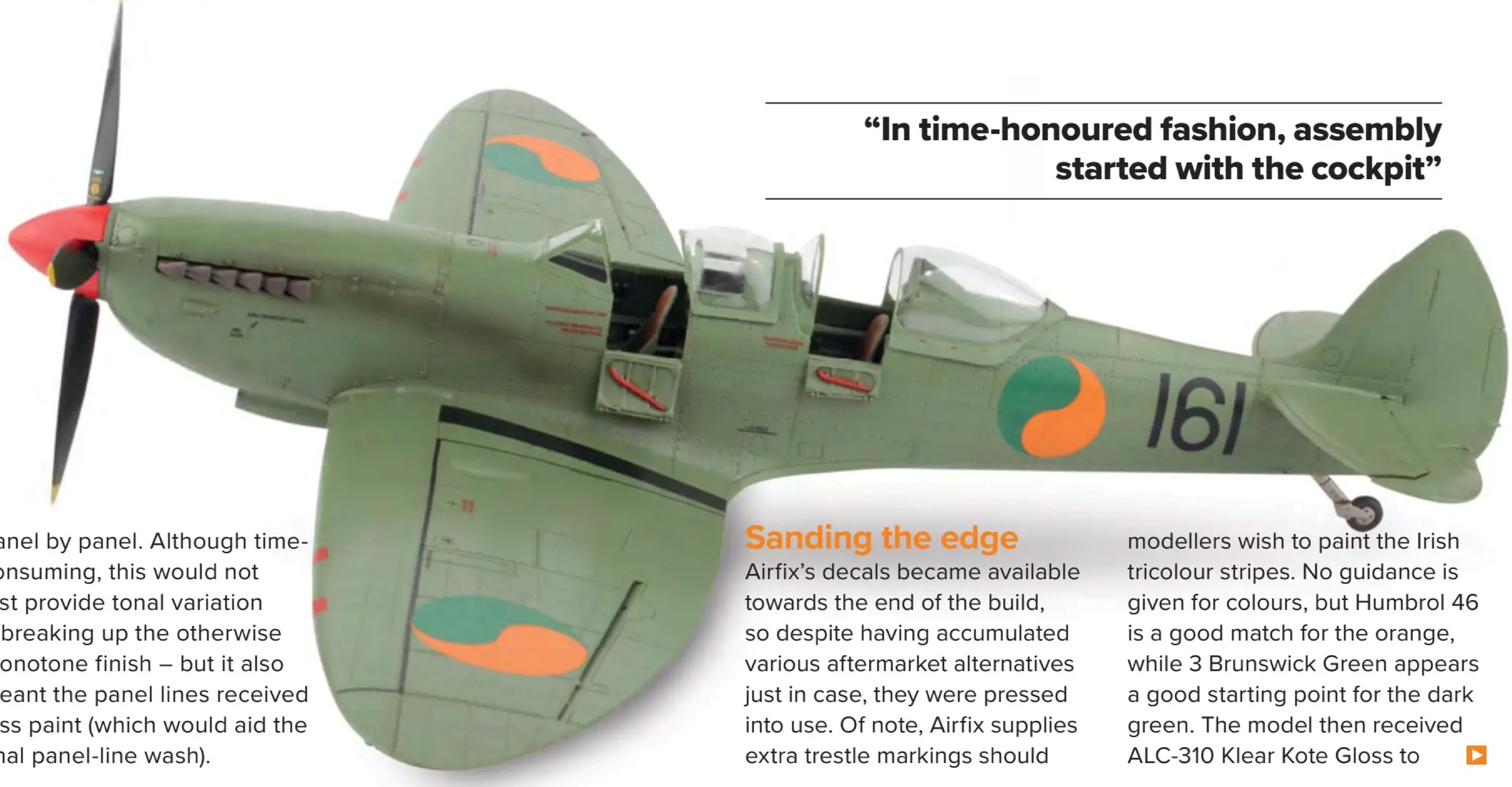
▲ With the upper wing halves attached, neatening the seams was a relatively swift and simple task.



▲ A thinly applied primer coat served the dual purpose of highlighting any blemishes and providing basic tonal variations.



▲ The overall Aircraft Grey Green colour was airbrushed panel by panel – while time-consuming, this resulted in further subtle variations in tone.



> **"In time-honoured fashion, assembly started with the cockpit"**

panel by panel. Although time-consuming, this would not just provide tonal variation – breaking up the otherwise monotone finish – but it also meant the panel lines received less paint (which would aid the final panel-line wash).

Sanding the edge

Airfix's decals became available towards the end of the build, so despite having accumulated various aftermarket alternatives just in case, they were pressed into use. Of note, Airfix supplies extra trestle markings should modellers wish to paint the Irish tricolour stripes. No guidance is given for colours, but Humbrol 46 is a good match for the orange, while 3 Brunswick Green appears a good starting point for the dark green. The model then received ALC-310 Klear Kote Gloss to ▶

seal the underlying paint and provide a reaction-free surface for the decals.

As expected, the decals – printed by Italian firm Cartograf – were trouble-free to apply, with just small amounts of Micro Sol used to help them conform with the fine recessed rivets. One small comment: the large wing walkway lines appear to have been swapped on the instructions, at least based on the chamfered end that meets the chord-wise line, but this might have been down to my misidentifying them on the sheet. The large Irish tricolours on the wing undersides were simple to add, the decals' rear edges aligning with the aileron gap (the ailerons were left off until after decaling). It was then a case of gently teasing the leading edge to wrap around the wing, before being left to dry for approximately half an hour.

I've tried several methods for trimming decals on curved surfaces, all of which have varying levels of success, but this time I used a fine sanding stick to gently abrade the decal along the leading edge until the airframe green showed. A piece of tmasking ape was then stuck onto the excess decal and simply pulled away, leaving a crisp edge to the tricolor.

Casting my mind back to the dilemma of how to show the detail but still remain faithful to the well-maintained airframes seen in reference photos, Raw Umber was selected as a panel line (and rivet) wash, this being dark enough to add contrast, but without appearing too stark. The model received ALC-600 Aqua Gloss Clear to protect the lacquer-based paints and decals from the wash, as I've seen the white spirit react with the former on previous builds. After being left overnight for the varnish to cure, the diluted wash was brushed over the model and left for roughly half-an-hour. Any excess oil was then removed with paper towels, while stubborn areas were treated using a white spirit-dampened cotton bud, before neatening them with the paper towels.

Minimal fittings

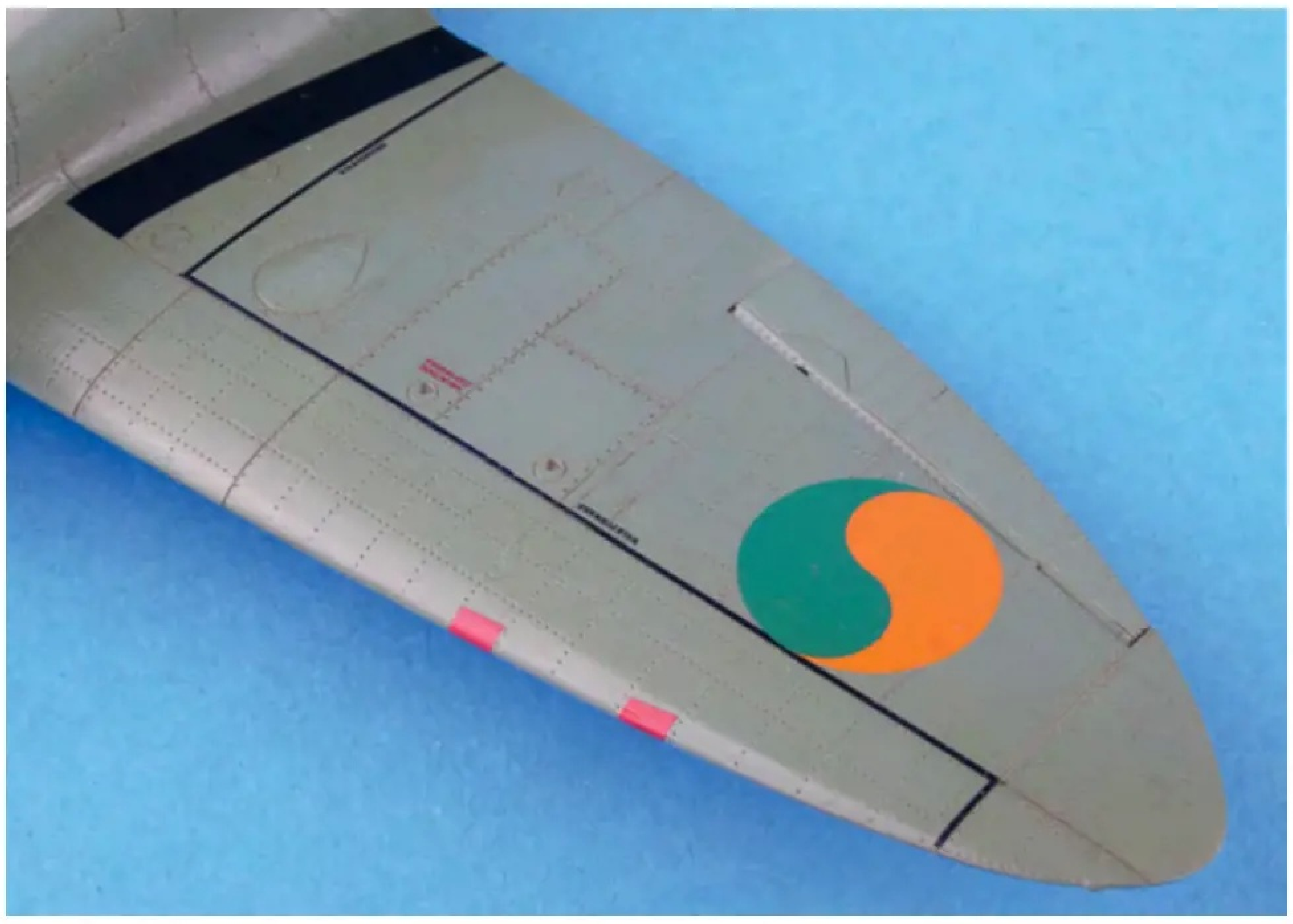
With the main airframe once again set aside to dry, focus switched to the remaining fittings, of which there were surprisingly few. The propellers and spinner were painted as per the instructions, decals being provided for the

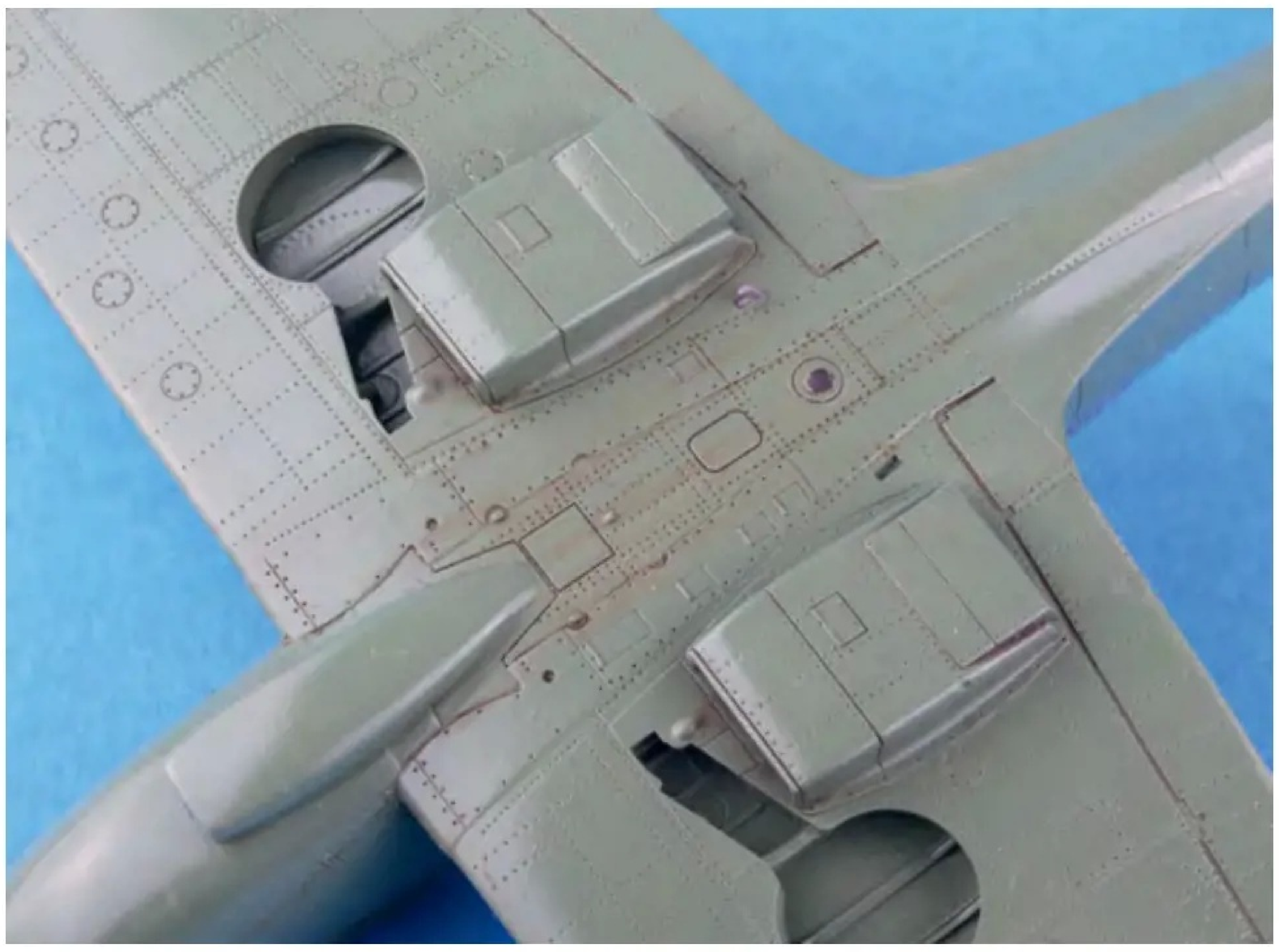
▲ Airfix supplies three wheel types, covering raised (right) and lowered (centre and left) undercarriage. The items on the left were used here.

▲ There are six parts for the propeller and spinner. Here, the base has received the interior colour while the hub has been sprayed Dark Aluminium.

▲ Once painted and decaled, the completed unit looked the part. It was used as a 'guinea-pig' for the roughly equal blend of matt and gloss varnish.

▲ After a preparatory coat of gloss varnish, the decals were applied without issue, this scheme being notable for its relative lack of stencilling.


▲ Weathering was limited to just a panel line wash, which was brushed onto the model after the decals had been sealed with an acrylic gloss varnish.



▲ Reference photos revealed that Irish Air Corps Spitfire Tr.9s were well maintained, so just minimal staining was added to the undersides.

▲ Adding the canopies was straightforward, with liquid cement used to secure the three pieces shown here.

"Another factor that must be considered was the amount of fine detail Airfix has incorporated into the external surfaces"

manufacturer labels, while the exhaust stubs (of which there are two types in the kit – make sure to use the 'fishtail' versions) received brush-painted Citadel Leadbelcher, followed by a light spraying of A.MIG-2320 Burnt Iron to impart a heat-damaged surface.

All glazing was masked with Tamiya tape on the outside, while pieces of Blu Tack were used for the inner faces – once the kit is released, a pre-cut masking set will be a real boon to modellers. All items were then airbrushed with the airframe colour, as were the ailerons and the outer faces of the undercarriage doors.

The landing gear was next. Block-pattern tyres are required for this airframe (ignore the circumferential tread versions), along with four-spoke outer hubs; larger diameter, three-spoke alternatives are also included. These were all airbrushed with A.MIG-2302 Dark Aluminium, before the tyres were hand-painted with XF-85 Rubber Black.

It was then a case of attaching these to the airframe. All but the two canopies were secured using liquid cement, with AMMO's A.MIG-2031 Ultra Glue favoured for these items, as this minimised the chance of the parts being damaged.

Terrific trainer

I've built many Spitfires over the years, but Airfix's new-tool Tr.9 was by far the easiest 1/48 kit to construct. I'll be honest and admit that – on initial inspection – I was sceptical regarding several aspects of the parts breakdown, but these were completely unfounded, and even the classic 'gotcha' of the wing root, which seems to be otherwise universal among other Spitfire kits (or at least it is to me!) wasn't an issue. If the build itself was a thoroughly enjoyable – and remarkably quick – project, then the Cartograf-printed decals were the perfect accompaniment, with the only problems encountered being all my own fault. The single-seat Spitfire Mk.IX is due from Airfix later this year and based on what I've experienced here, it's going to be an absolute belter in terms of build quality and fit.

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

Abteilung502 (www.ak-interactive.com)
Abt090 Industrial Earth

Alclad (www.alclad2.com)
ALC-310 Klear Kote Gloss
ALC-314 Klear Kote Flat
ALC-600 Aqua Gloss Clear

AMMO (www.migjimenez.com)
A.MIG-2031 Ultra Glue
A.MIG-2302 Dark Aluminium
A.MIG-2320 Burnt Iron
A.MIG-2350 Grey Primer & Microfiller

Citadel (www.warhammer.com)
Leadbelcher

Daler Rowney (www.daler-rowney.com)
247 Raw Umber

Humbrol (https://uk.humbrol.com)
33 Black
62 Leather

Mr. Color (www.albionhobbies.com)
C364 Aircraft Grey Green BS283
MC219 Brass

Tamiya (www.hobbyco.net)
LP-5 Semi Gloss Black
X-7 Red
XF-85 Rubber Black

Vallejo (www.creativemodels.co.uk)
71.003 Scarlet Red

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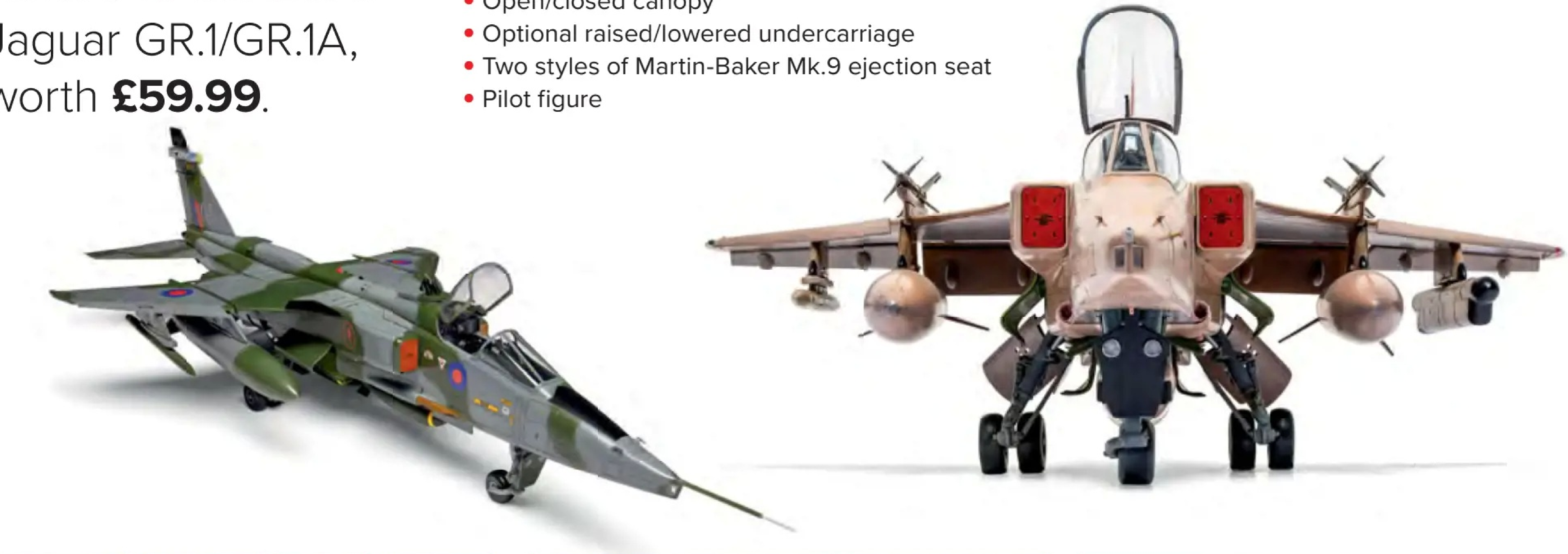

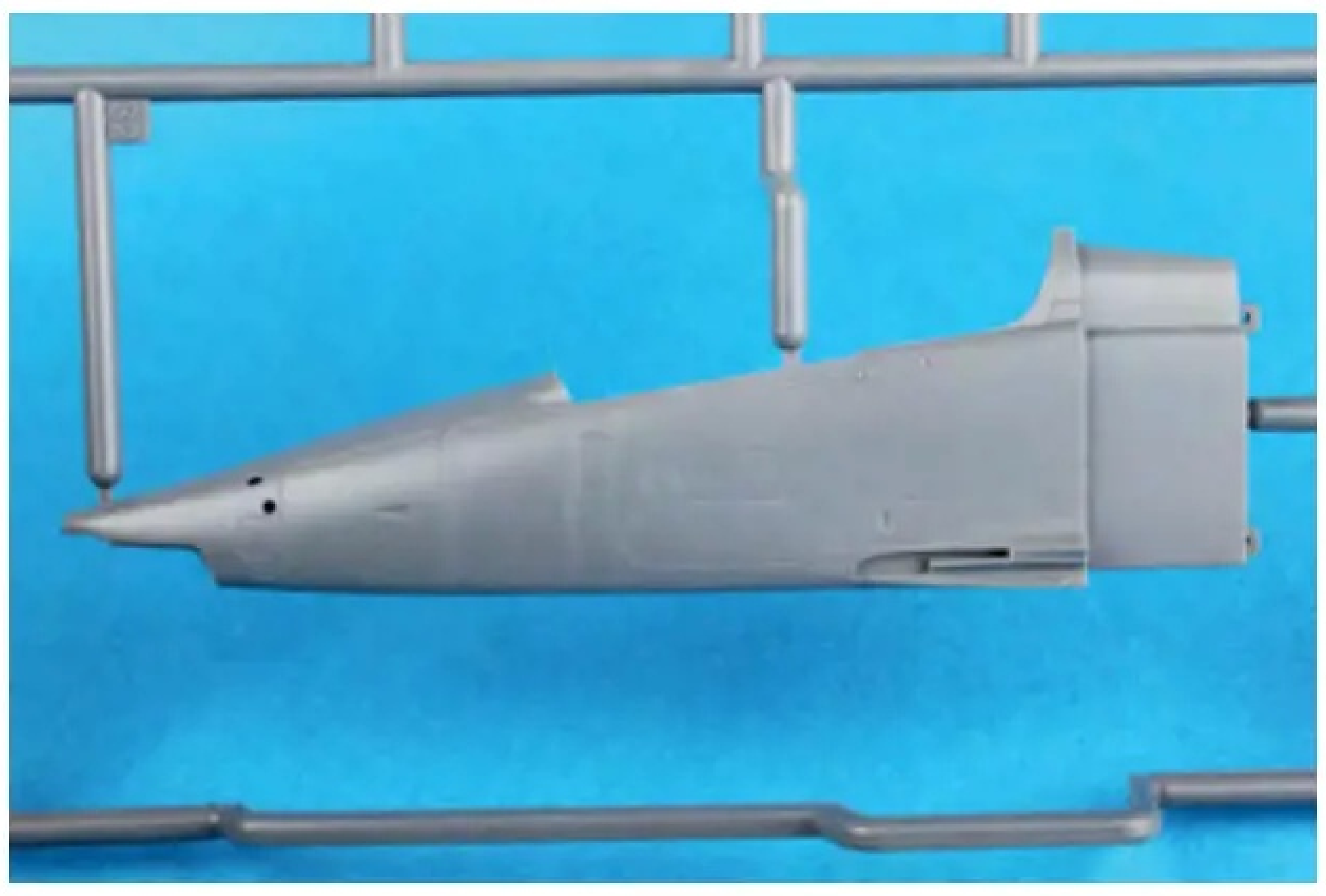

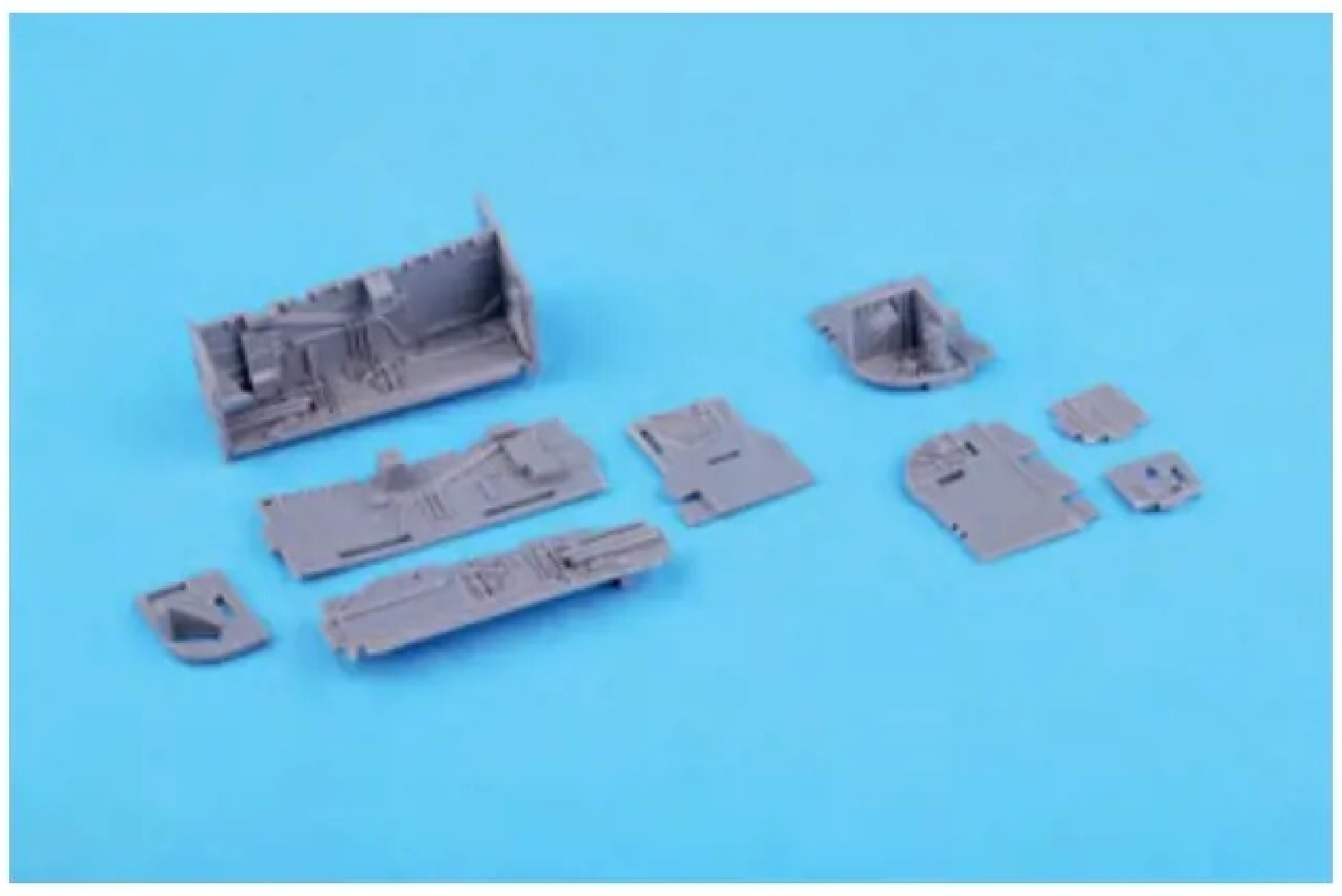

The closing date for this competition is Friday, August 15, 2025. Winners will be notified by Friday, August 22, 2025. For full terms and conditions, please visit the KeyModelWorld website.

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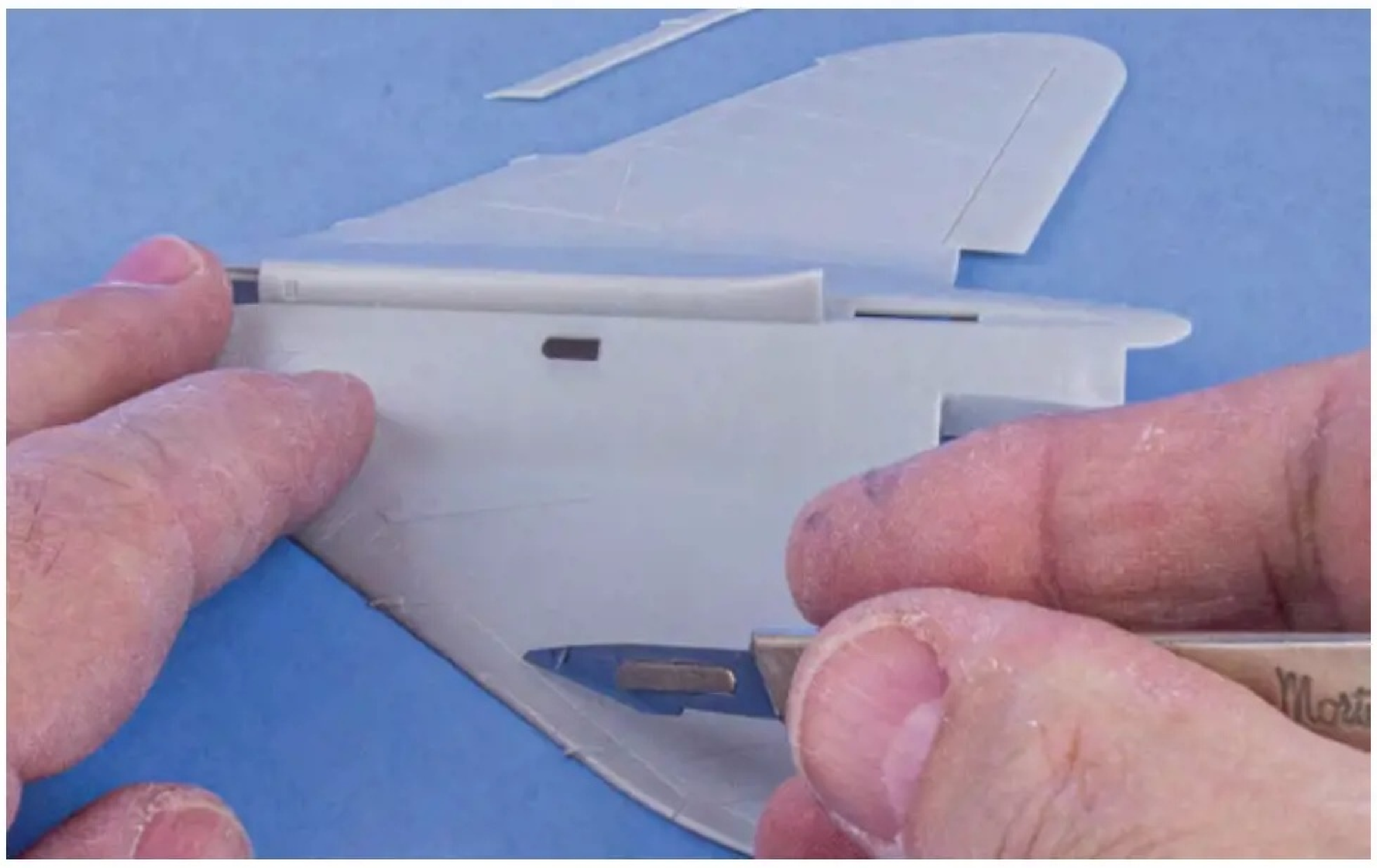
BODACIOUS BATOMORPH

Confronted with a friendly challenge, **Kev Baxter** fired up the oven to Gas Mark 4 and set to making the excellent 'shake and bake' Tamiya 1/72 Douglas F4D-1 Skyray in a fortnight

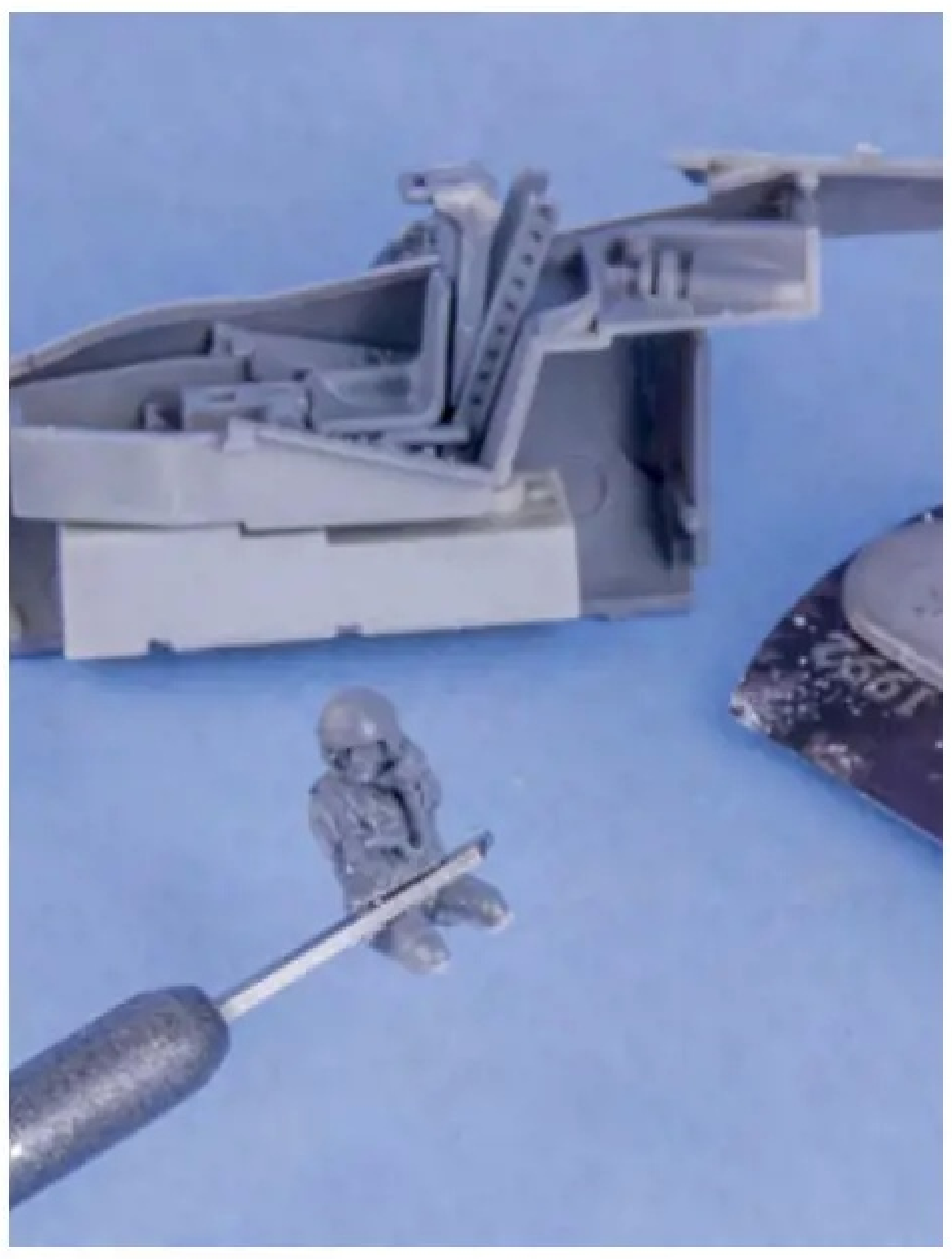
Scale ModelWorld 2024, Sunday afternoon, as the whirlwind began to subside there was time for one last wander around the halls. A trade stand was selling old stock at knock-down prices and, among the offers was a fabulous Tamiya 1/72 Douglas F4D-1 Skyray, for the princely sum of just £7.99. I'd built Airfix's kit of the type back in 1990 (sadly a casualty of numerous house moves) and thoroughly enjoyed it, but Tamiya's iteration of the bodacious batomorph (Batoidia – taxonomy of the ray), had never been on the stash-list. The opportunity to grab a bargain and repeat the fun was not to be missed and… on showing the purchase to fellow club members, two hot-footed it to buy their own Skyrays. During a post-show conversation, a mischievous suggestion arose: why not build it over Christmas, with the winner decided at the club competition in January?

Challenge accepted

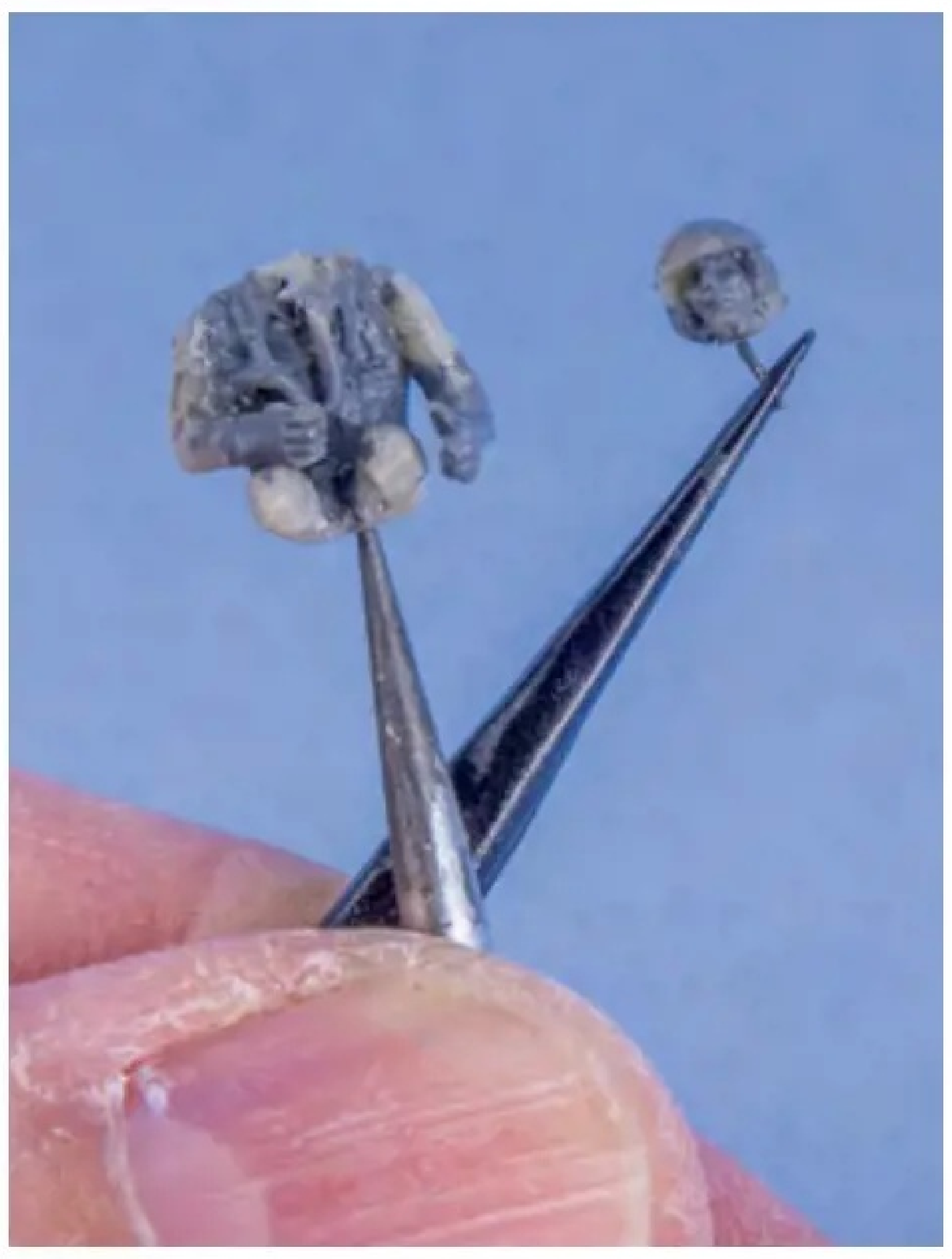
Not considered at the time was that January is when our club holds its AGM, which meant no



▲ With a few swipes of the razor saw and brand-new blade, the slats were removed to represent them in landing configuration.



▲ Using a razor saw and chisel, Lt Legless was bent to fit into his ejector seat.



▲ UBy drilling and pinning along the line of the spine, Lt Legless' head was squared away, facing front like a good Marine.

competition for another month… a breathing space for my build had appeared and the gauntlet was grasped. One builder completed his Skyray in just ten days over the Christmas break – a testament to the quality of this classic kit – setting a target for the remaining duo. Seeking an edge in this friendly endeavour, I found an Arma Hobby Essex/ Midway Class, teak flight-deck. On seeing this gem, the idea arose of the jet landing on the flight-deck and catching a wire, rather than attempt to scratch-build a wing fold, which would have exceeded the challenge time frame. A study of references revealed the kit would need modification, naturally, but since it was regarded as a 'shake-and-bake' product, the time required for the specific alterations could be justified. Hence, the build started, like many projects before, with a bout of minor deconstruction.

Being a delta planform, the Skyray's outer trailing edge control surfaces comprised elevons, rather than conventional fixed-wing controls. Inboard were large trim-tabs, which worked symmetrically but were restricted to movement of -1° to +12°; when landing, these were set high to increase the angle of attack at low speed. It was a simple task to remove these with a few swipes of a razor saw… the leading-edge slats were tackled later. A study of references revealed the aircraft has a nose-high attitude at launch; therefore, during a trap the nosewheel would compress, which required another few moments of effort with a razor saw, mini-drill and aluminium tubing. It was decided to remove the rudder and replace this in an offset position; this served to aid painting the model and add more dynamism to the landing.

Drag curve

Since speed was of the essence, the instructions weren't followed, and parts were assembled out of sequence and set aside to dry… all while pondering the lunacy of the self-imposed time-limit. When considering the leading-edge slats, it was decided to 'fudge' their appearance to avoid the need to cut the three guide rails in the underside. The slats could then be glued directly to the leading edge - nobody was going to look anyway, it was surmised. Accordingly, the corresponding pieces were removed, glued together and the gap at the rear filled and given an aerofoil shape.

MODEL SPEC

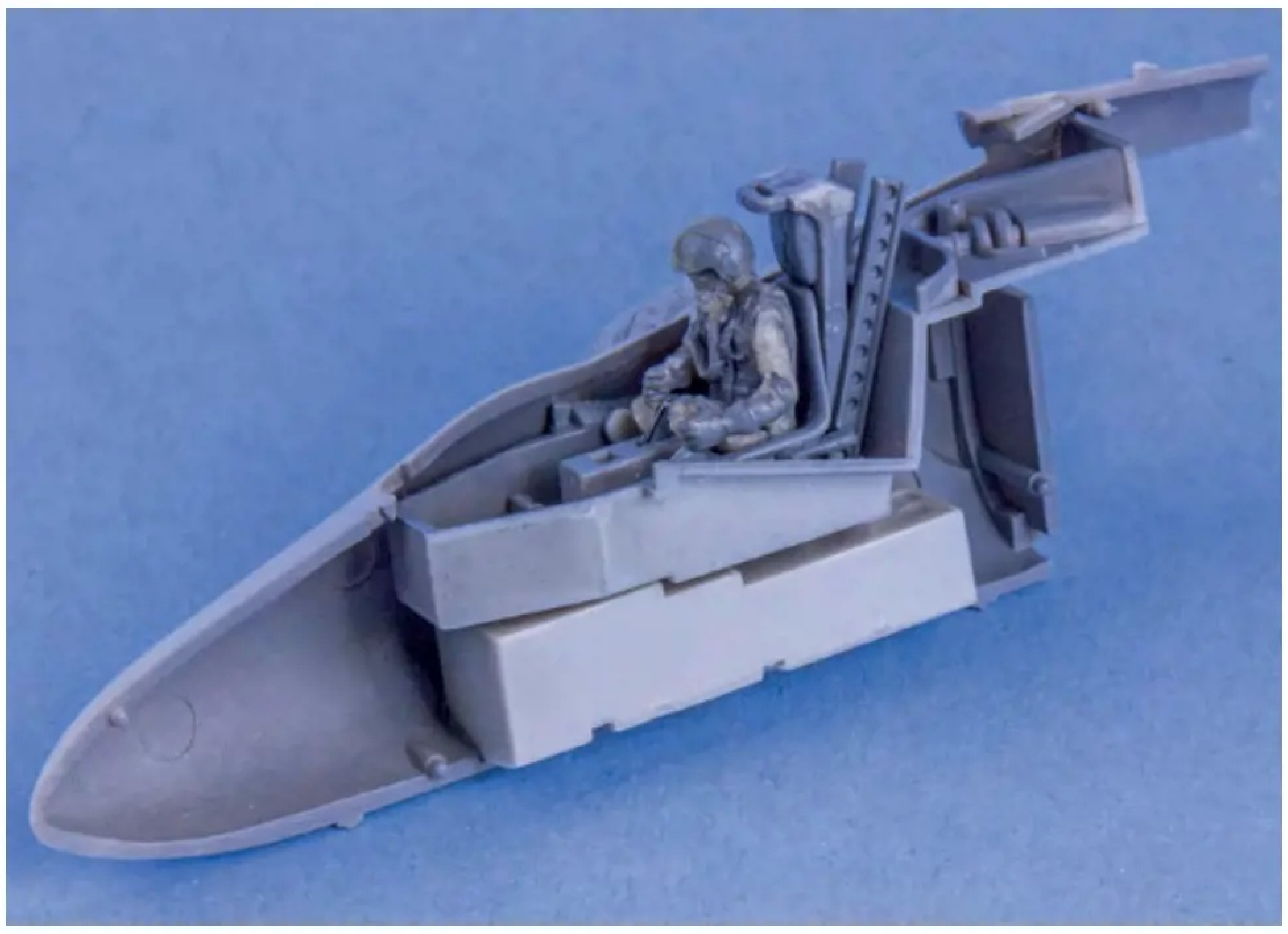
Douglas F4D-1 Skyray
By: Tamiya
Stock code: 60741
Scale: 1/72
Price: £14.95
Available from: Tamiya stockists

DOUGLAS F4D-1
SKYRAY
TAMIYA

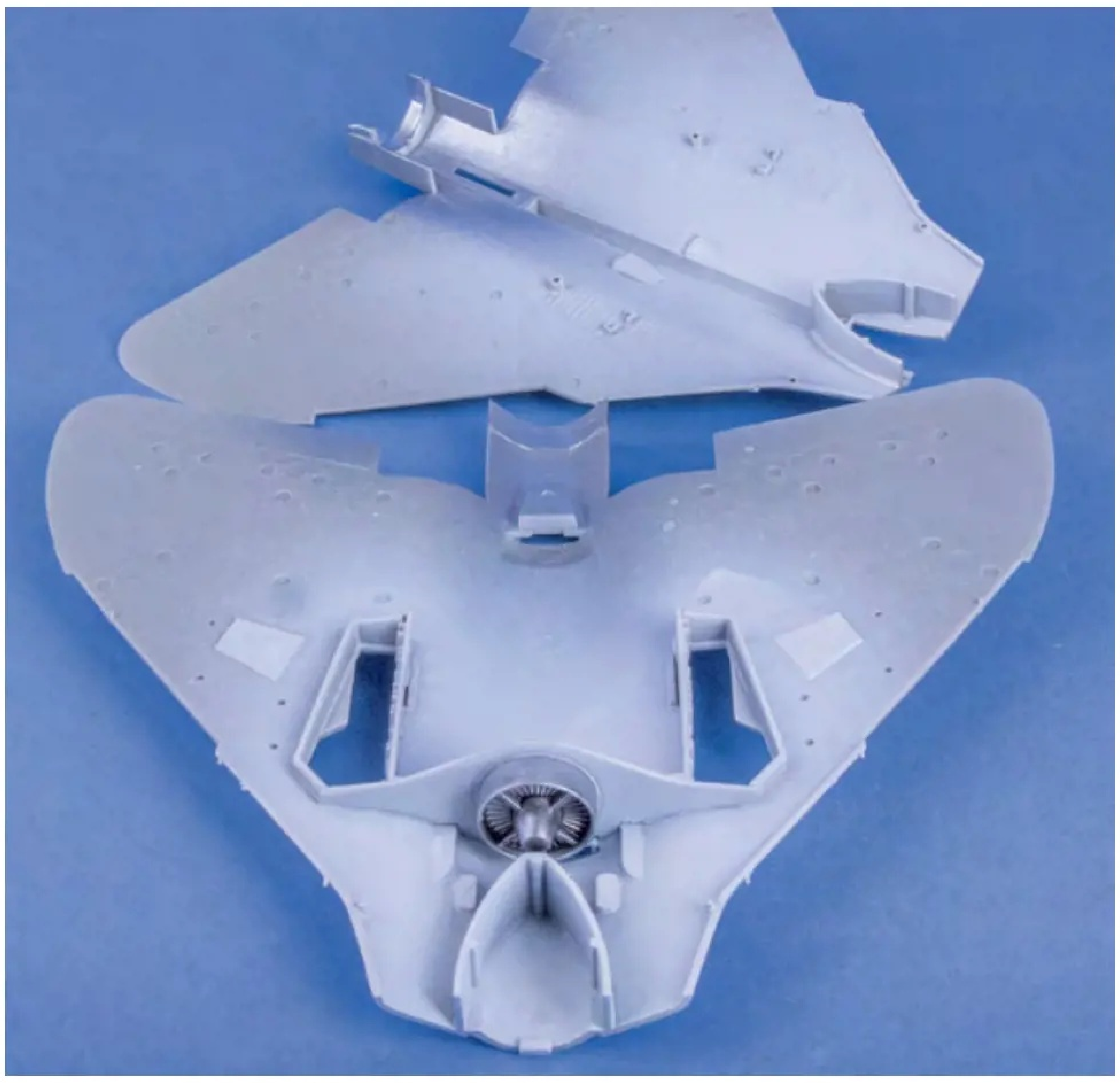
Examining the horizontally split rear fuselage/wing halves, it was noted that several prominent intakes and exhausts would benefit from capping to prevent a 'see-through' look. This was achieved using thin plastic card – sourced from coffee cup lids – which was trimmed to fit. Holes were then drilled for the underwing pylons. Tamiya provides a lovely compressor fan facsimile for the Pratt & Whitney J-57, which was painted using a mixture of brush-applied, metal paints, for ease. This part was attached after the intakes received Halford's White Primer. With an application of Halford's Aluminium spray at the rear, the fuselage halves could then be joined.

Lieutenant Legless

Traditionally, most aircraft kits begin with the cockpit and, while the detail was more than adequate for an aircraft with its canopy closed, having to shoehorn in a recalcitrant pilot (a PJ Productions' figure was used as there isn't one in the kit) was always going to be tricky. Minimal effort



▲ With the pilot modified, the cockpit was brought together (without glue) to ensure a good fit prior to painting.

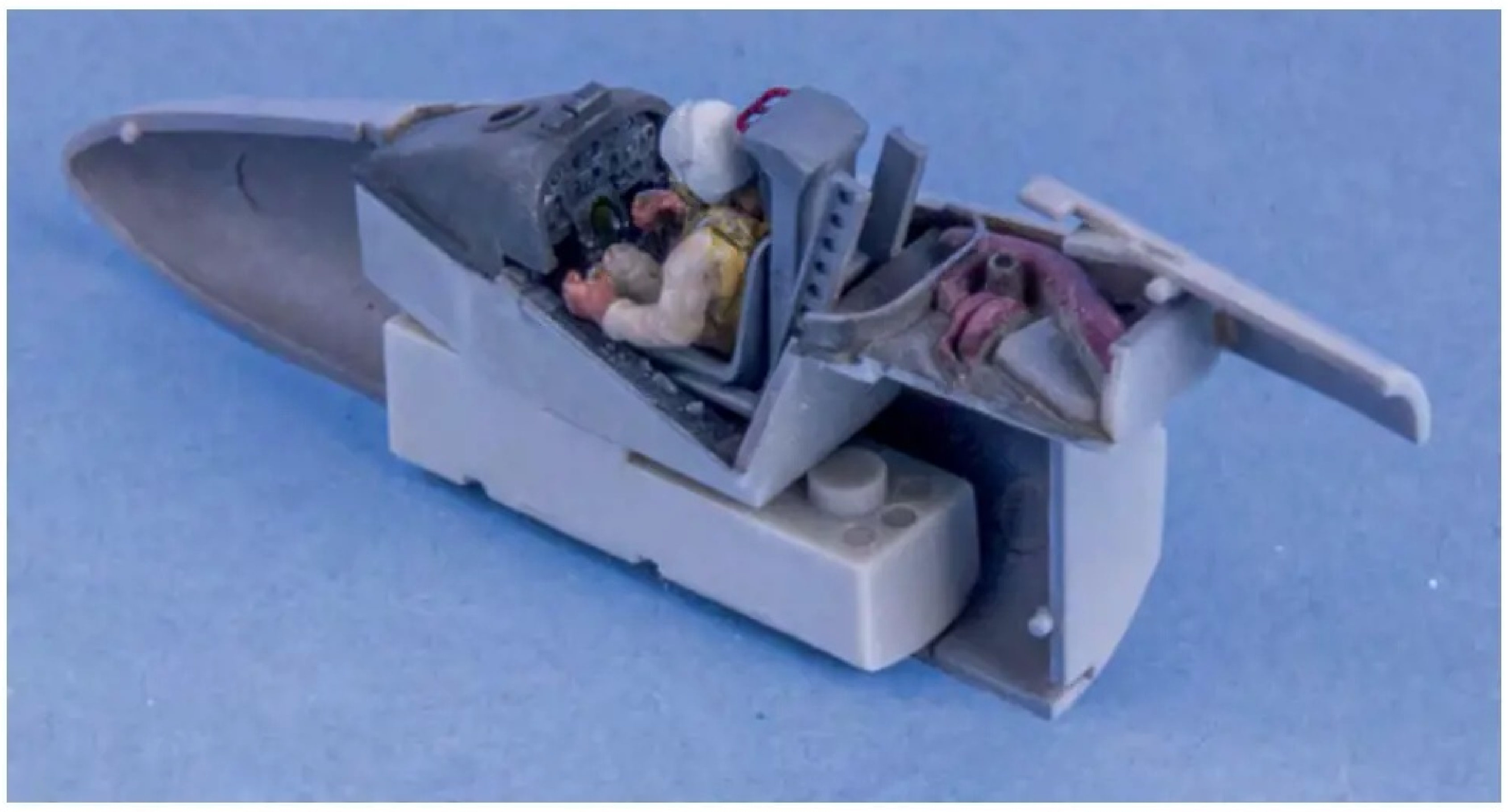


▲ The air intakes and wheel bays were sprayed with Halfords White Primer and the engine's compressor face and bay painted a natural metal shade.

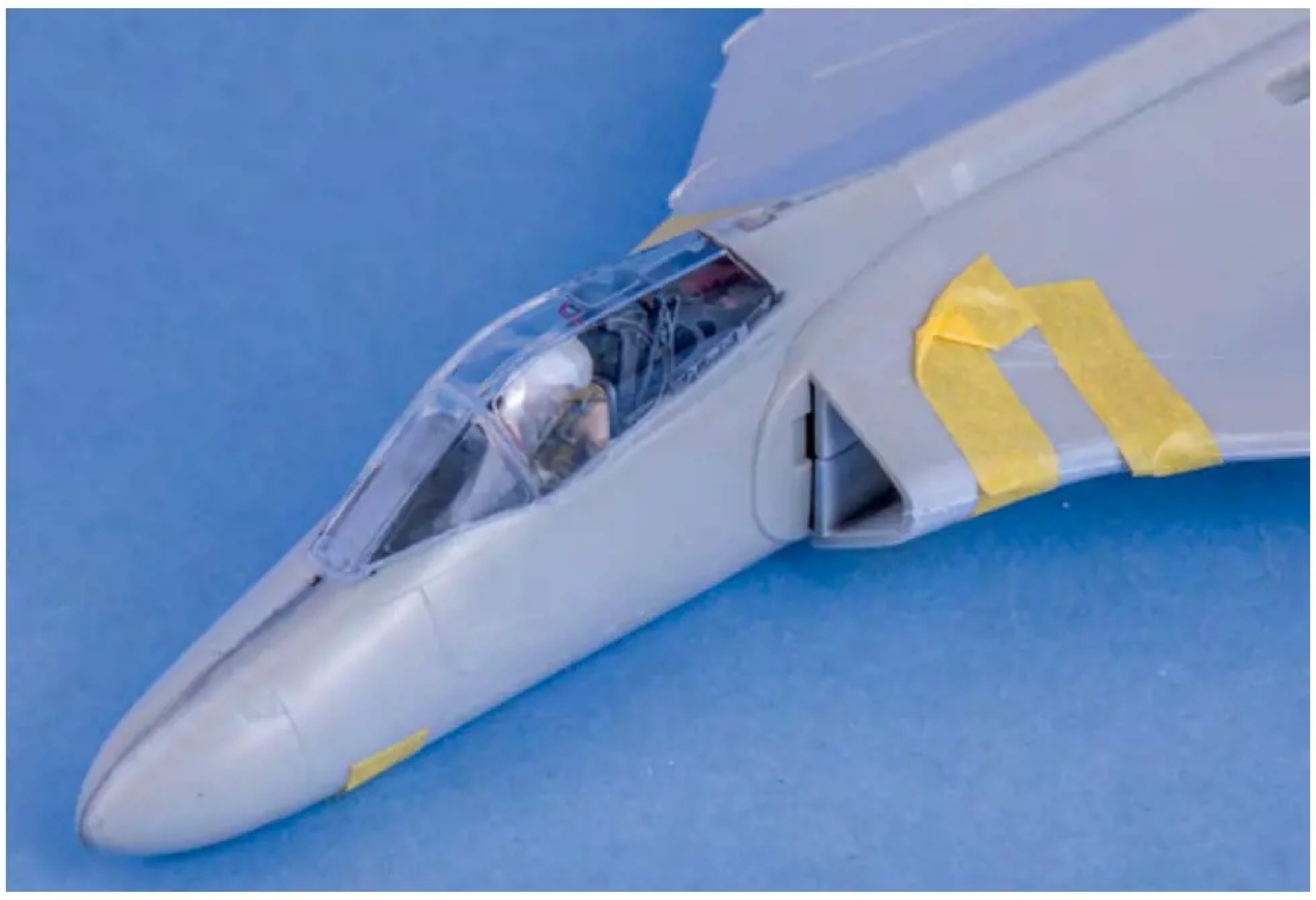
> **"Since speed was of the essence, the instructions weren't followed"**

was required to highlight the detail, with a light dry brushing more than adequate, while dial needles were scratched into the instrument panel. The kit's ejection seat was retained, despite it being an early version (aircraft were likely retrofitted with Martin-Baker seats by the early 1960s). This caused a slight dilemma, as the helmet worn by the PJ Production figure was a later type (seats and helmets appear to have been updated at roughly the same time), but it was decided to have an early seat with late 'bone dome'.

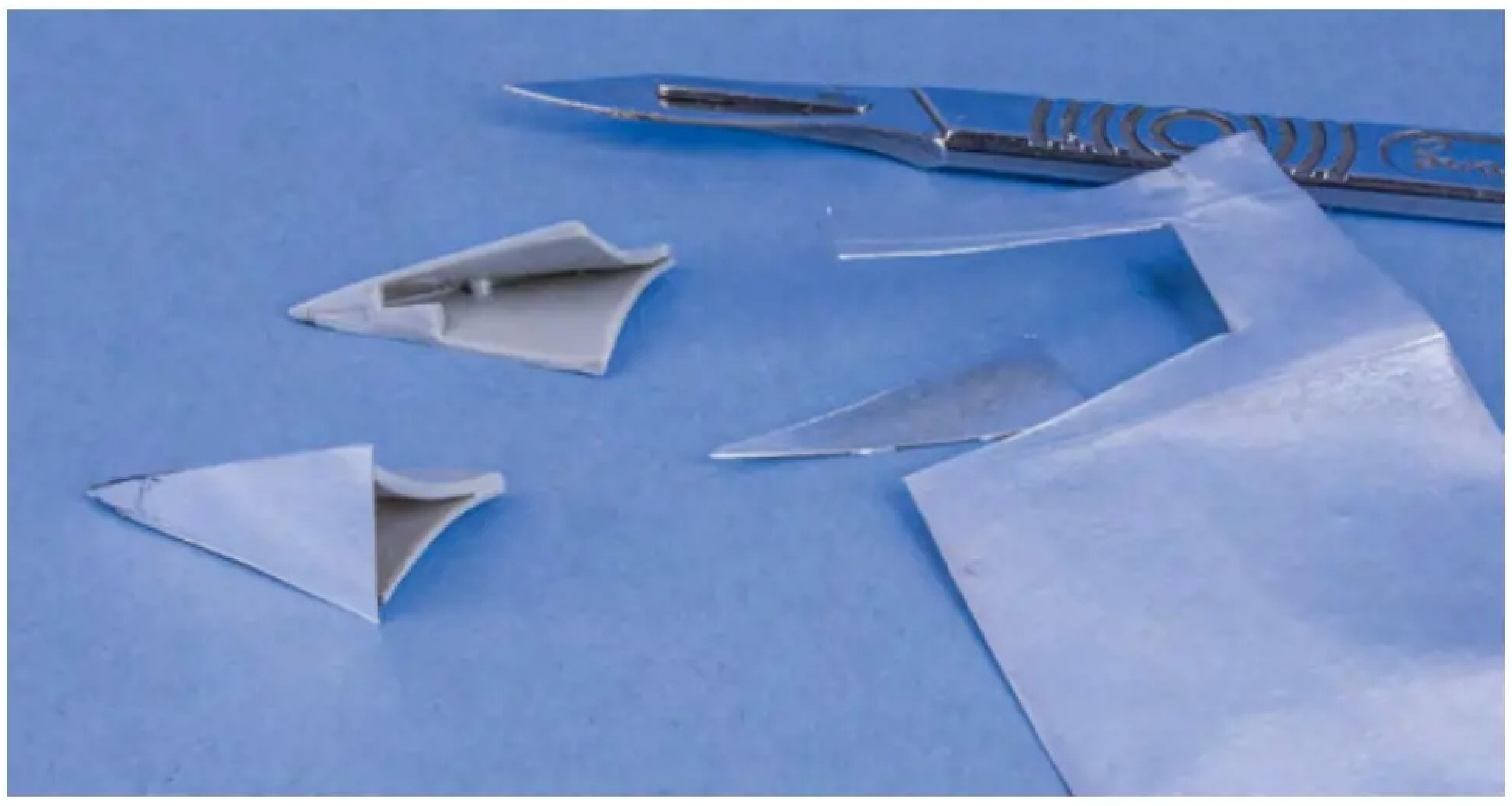
Moreover, the figure was in a very relaxed pose and not that of a naval aviator clenched against the rigours of an arrested landing. Thus, 'Lieutenant Legless', as he became known, began his transformation. Trying to jam feet and legs under an unseen instrument panel always seemed too much trouble, so the figure was unceremoniously cropped at the knees, while the waving arm was removed and repositioned, but not before major abdominal surgery to curl him into the seat-pan was undertaken. Once satisfied the figure fitted into the seat and reached the controls, off came



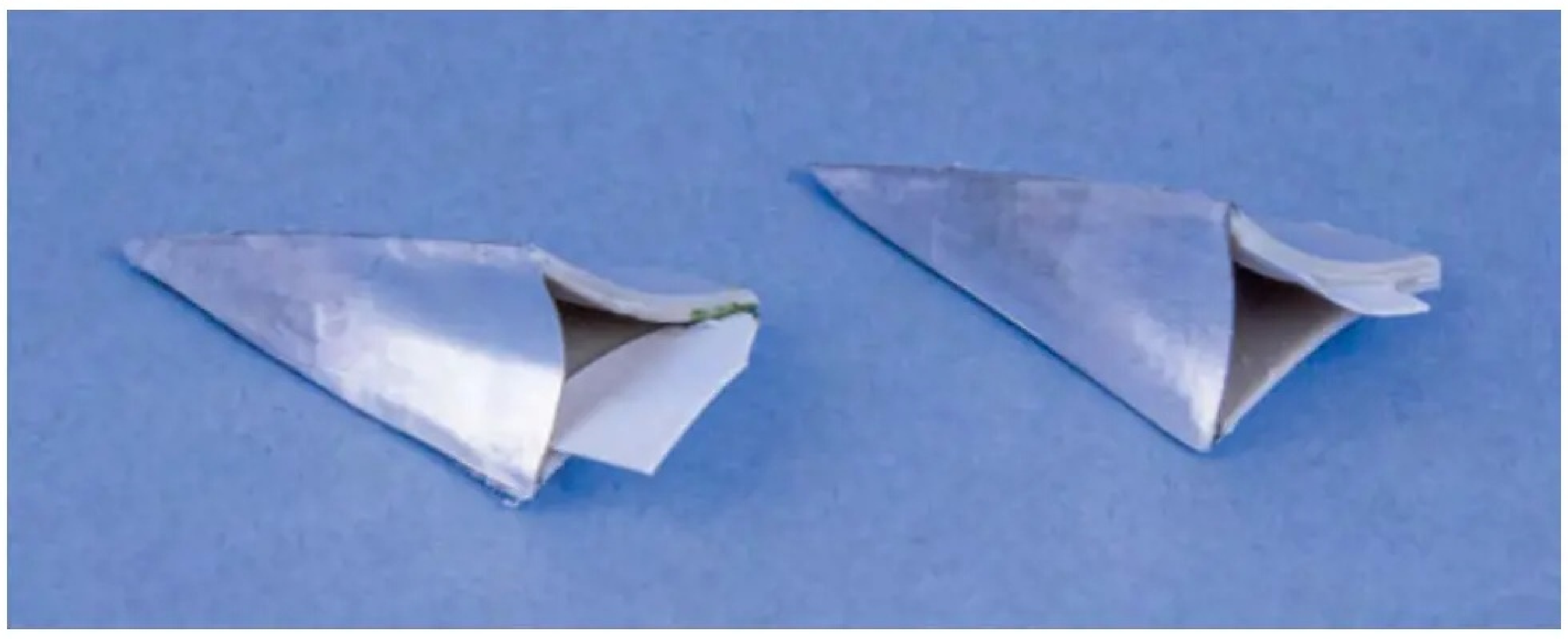
▲ The cockpit area and pilot after construction and painting, ready for assembly into the fuselage.



▲ The tight tolerances on the canopy's fit caused the liquid cement to mar the windscreen via capillary action.

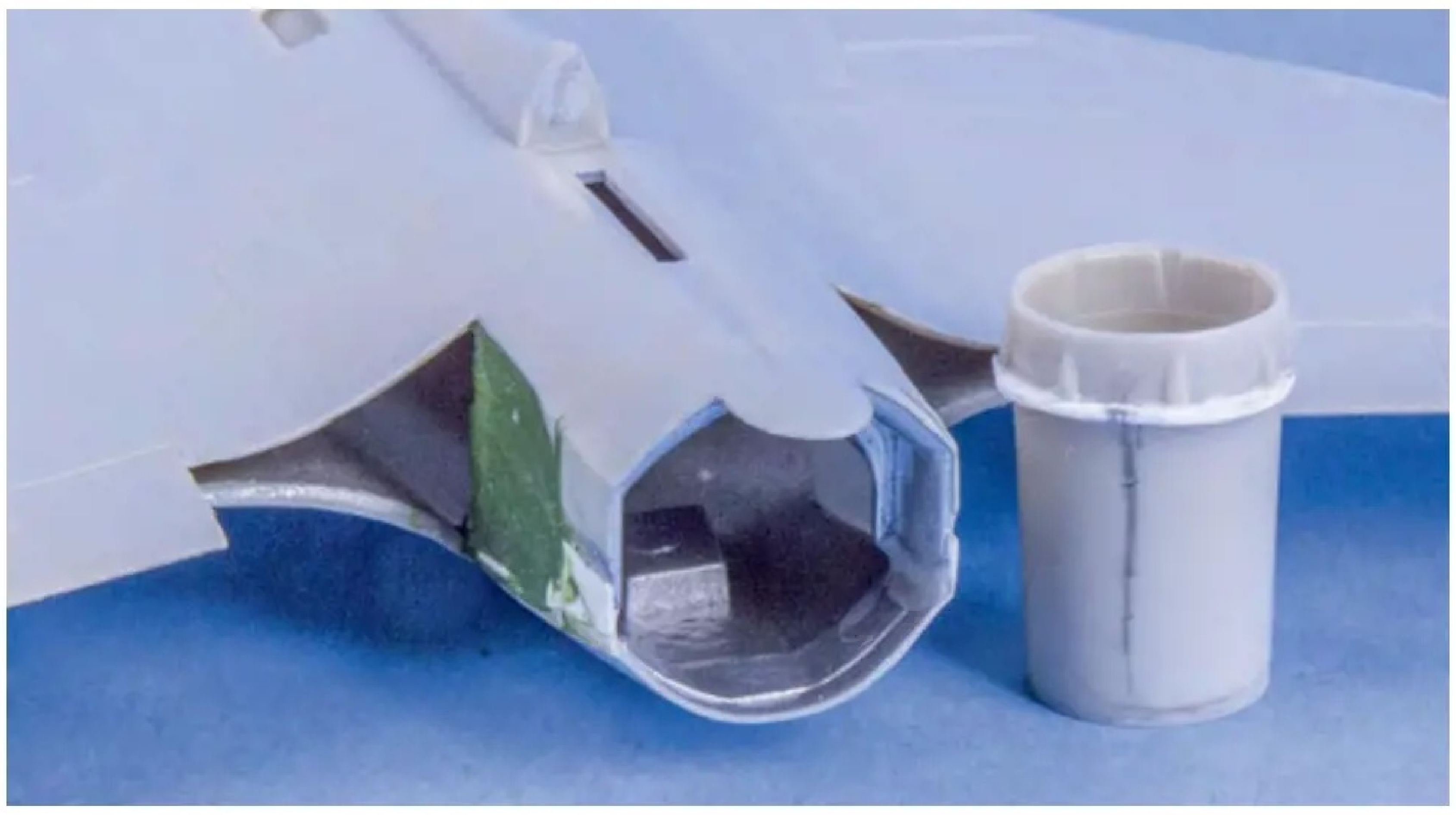


▲ Wine bottle foil was used to replicate the bare-metal finish of the pitch trimmers and rear fuselage.



▲ Awaiting riveting on the foil, the pitch trimmers' locating tabs were made from coffee cup lids.

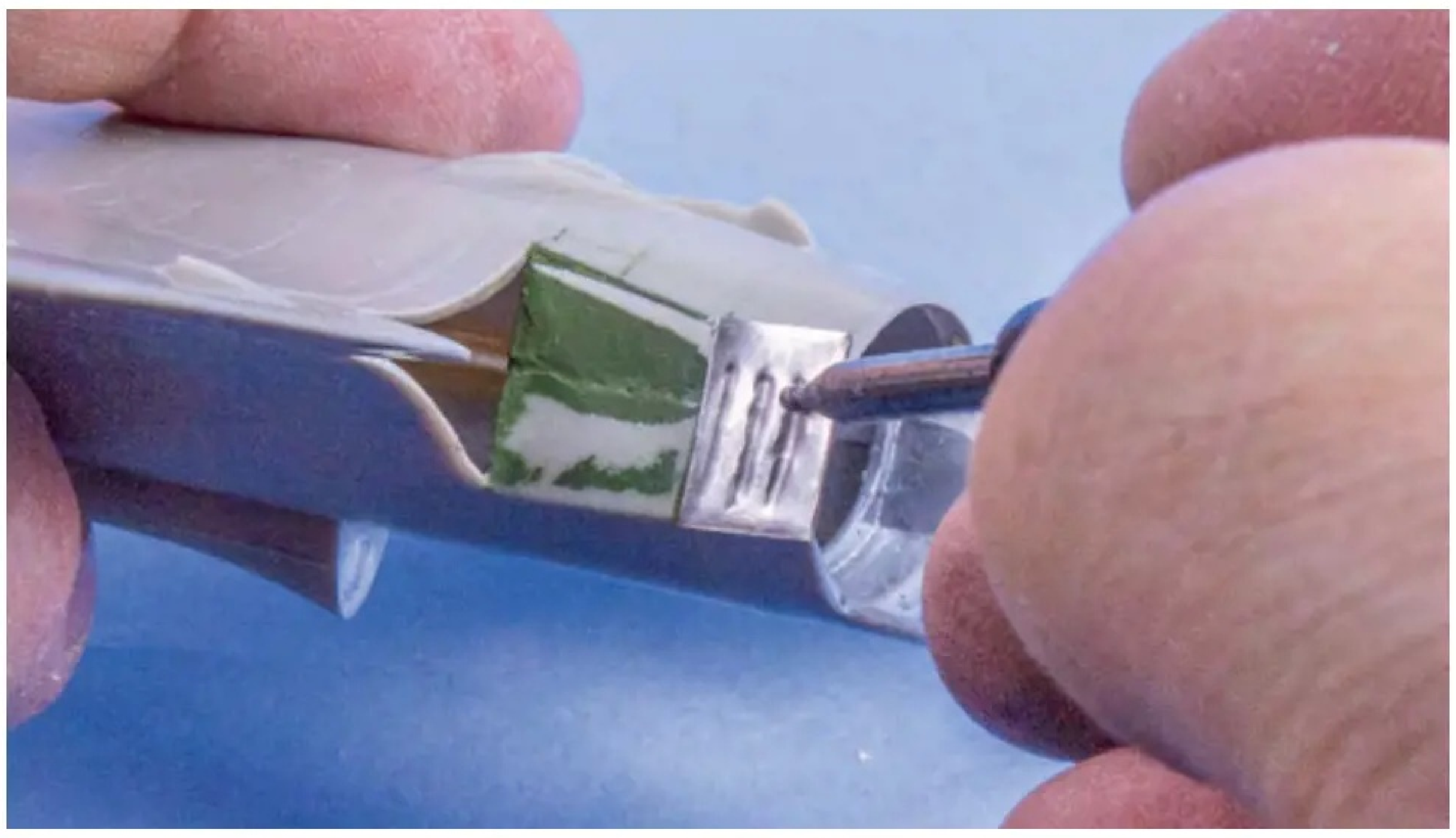
his head – this allowed the sideways looking, mask-off pose to be altered into a front-facing, masked appearance. After painting and shading, Lt Legless was attached to the seat, with a new firing handle created from led wire and the cockpit clipped neatly onto the nosewheel bay, before the forward fuselage halves were joined, with just minor fettling needed before the canopy would fit correctly. Unfortunately, this encouraged the liquid cement to squeeze up the inside of the windscreen, thus marring its clarity – another bodge and a slightly shorter mask on the windscreen would be needed to fix the problem.


▲ The exhaust was prepared by filling the affected areas of the pitch trimmer and adding a collar for the jet-pipe.

▲ Aluminium tubing was used to compress the nose-gear oleo-strut.

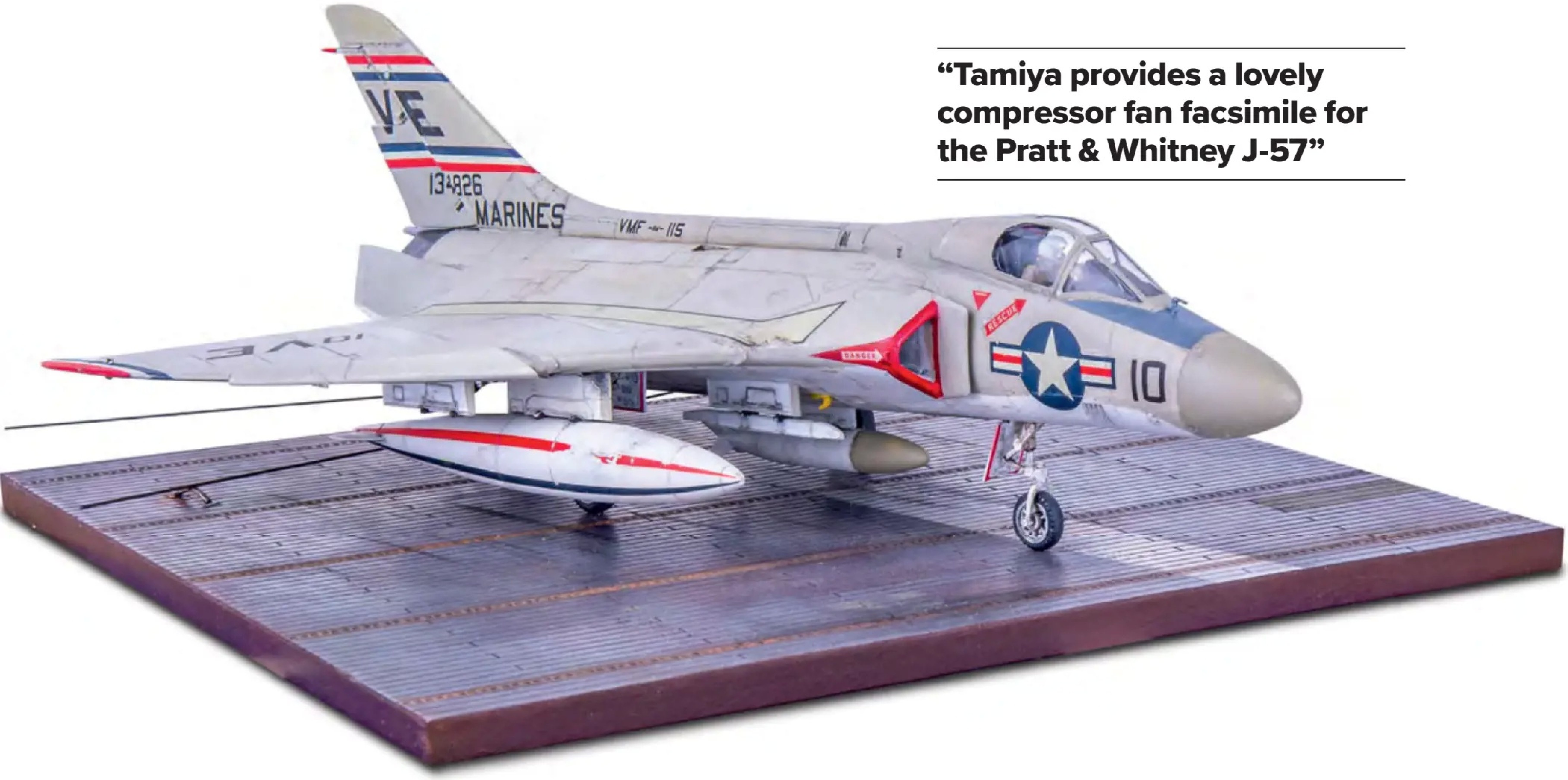
Holes in the plan

Having re-located the flying surfaces, there were plenty of holes visible, namely the leading edges under the slats, and the rear, lower fuselage at the jet-pipe. Since most would be covered by the original parts, the answer was simply to fill any remaining gaps with sheet plastic. The leading edge repairs were simple, via filling and reprofiling, the metallic area surrounding the jet pipe gave pause for thought. Most


▲ Strengthening grooves in the rear fuselage were created via an old Letraset burnisher. Most of this area would be obscured by the pitch trimmers.

▲ The rudder was removed to enable masking the rear fuselage metallic areas, being replaced later.

> **“Tamiya provides a lovely compressor fan facsimile for the Pratt & Whitney J-57”**



airframes appeared to have had three strengthening divots embossed into the panel and it was decided to use wine-bottle lead foil to tackle these panels plus the inner surfaces of the pitch trimmers, which, coincidentally, were also left unpainted on the real aircraft. Once the missing fuselage surface was filled and sanded, three trenches were reamed into the plastic with a Dremel tool and burr, then the foil was bonded to the surface with superglue and the divots traced into the metal using an old burnishing tool. The rear fuselage and canopy were then prepared for black primer; this had the happy accident of over-spraying the masking.

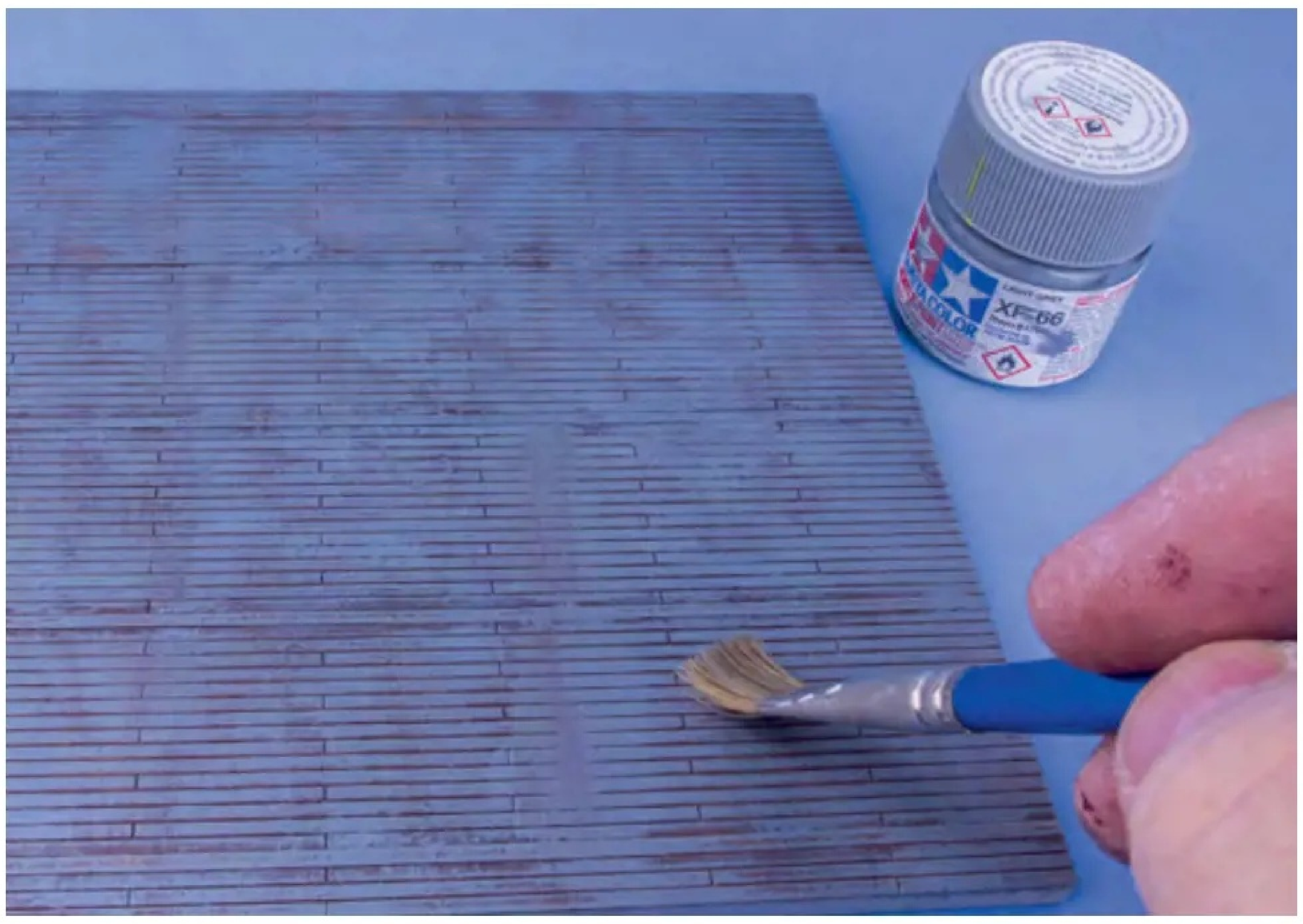
At this point the fin should be attached, but it was clear the rudder would cause issues when masking the metallic areas, so it was removed with a razor saw. Two tabs were glued into the pitch trimmers and once these had been set into the fuselage and the gaps filled, it was time to break out the paint.

What colour?

In an effort to speed the build, the whole model was treated with Halford's White Primer, solving the underside and control surface colours… unfortunately, it didn't quite cover the black overspray caused by priming the metallic tail pipe. On reflection, it was considered this accidental pre-shading wasn't unusable and its appearance could be improved later. References and decal selection had pushed the build towards a US Marine Corps airframe. These tended to give an unpainted radome (similar to Light Gull Gray in tone), plus a darker grey anti-glare panel (these were mostly black on US Navy Skyrays).

Having masked the control surfaces and anti-glare panel, Hataka's FS 36440 Light Gull Gray was applied and, having dried with a matt sheen, it was polished using T-Cut instead of spraying gloss varnish. This not only helped to preserve the delicate moulded detail, but the tonal depth could be modulated gently with the undercoat to simulate sun bleaching. Moreover, the residual black overspray in the panel lines helped to enhance this illusion. A slight amount of polishing residue remaining in the detail and post-shading would complete the weathered effect. Clearly, even the best laid plans and with the best of kits can fall foul of reality, as removal of masking also lifted a section of paint… fortunately, careful re-masking, followed by re-spraying the affected area, resolved the problem.

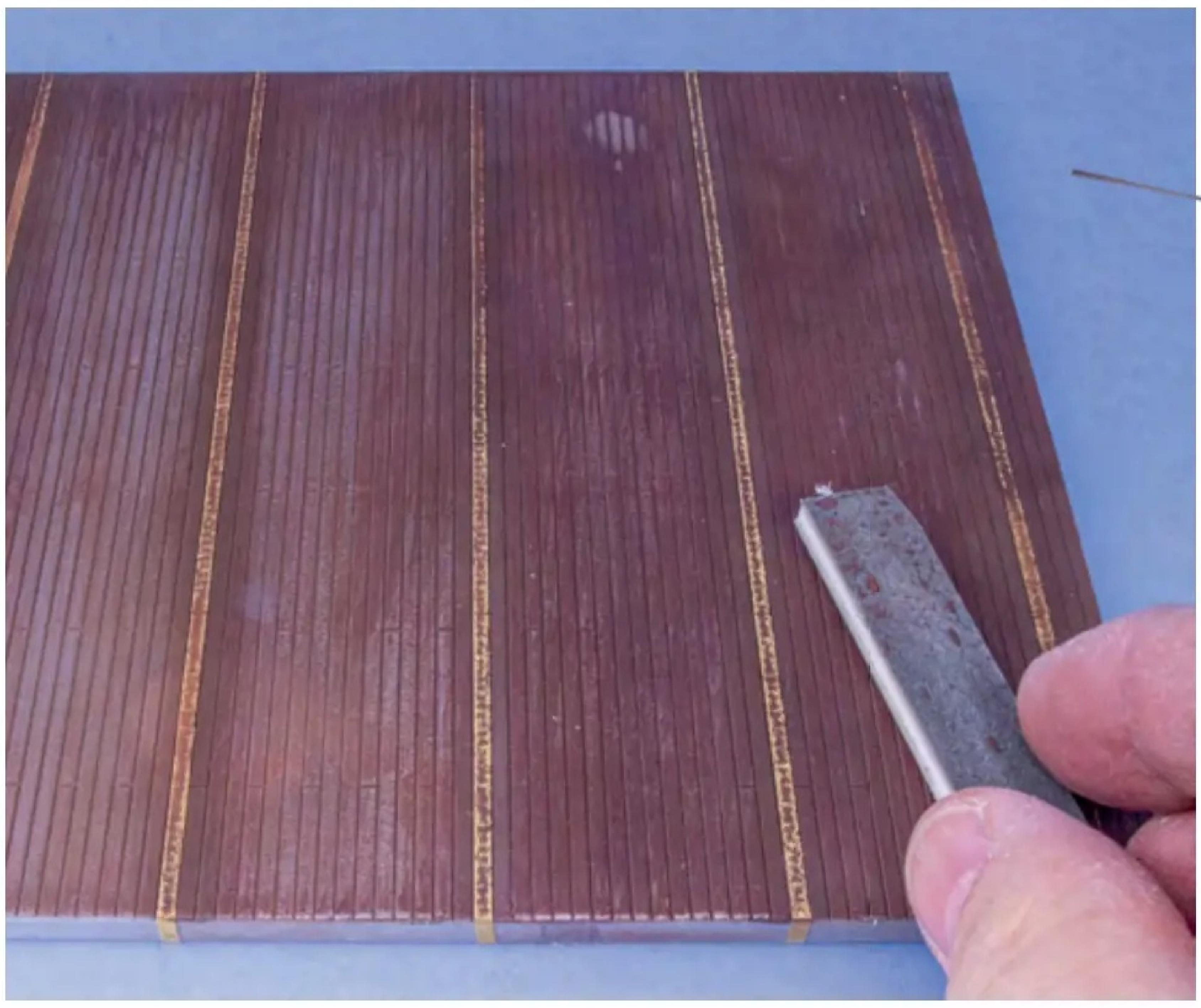
It was decided to give the radome a light coat of Tamiya's Deck Tan over the Light Gull Gray to represent the fibre-glass material. Rather than trusting to old decals conforming to the intakes' compound curves, these were also masked and sprayed, with the 'Danger' arrows cut from the decals applied.



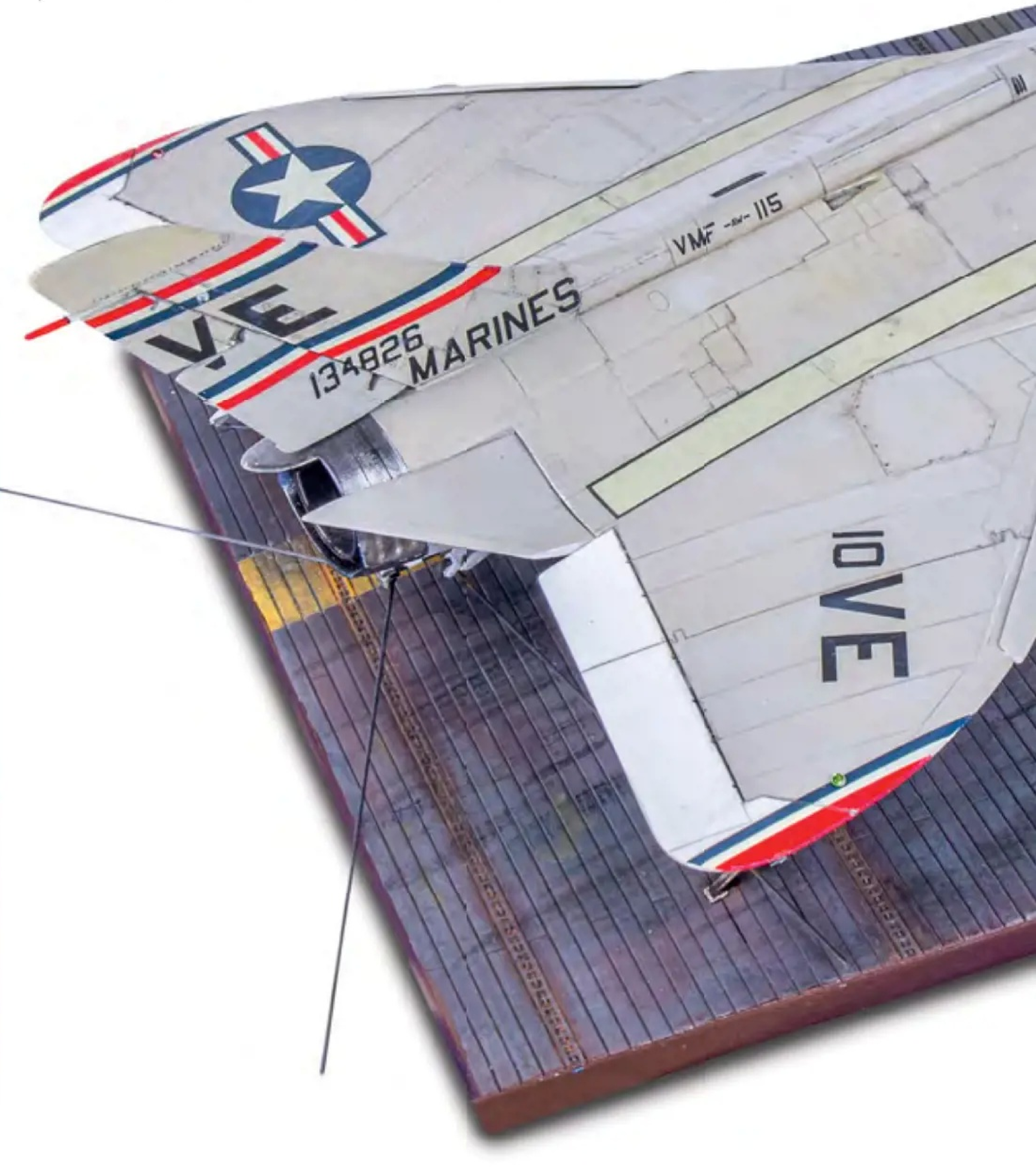
▲ Tamiya Light Grey was streaked in the direction of travel of the wind and sea-spray across the deck to replicate the anti-slip coating.

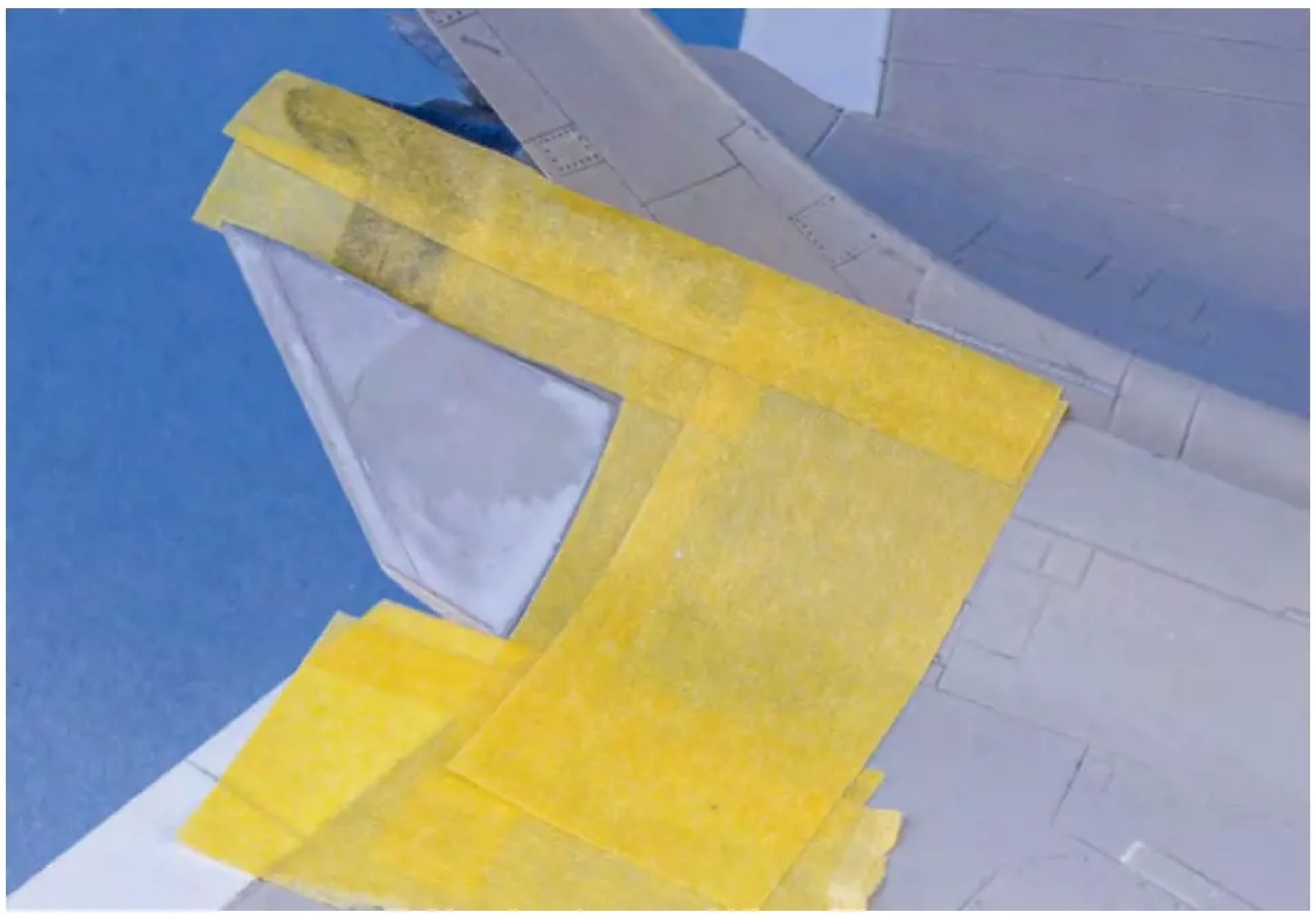
Choices, choices

Looking at the kit decals, the varnish layer appeared quite thick, so a scheme from Superscale's 72-186 F4D-1 Skyray sheet for a USMC VMF(AW)-115 Silver Eagles airframe was selected. In the end a combination was used, as the aftermarket items appeared slightly cruder in places. Notably, this unit was embarked on the USS Hancock (CVA-19) in 1960, during which carrier qualifications were performed, hence the empty underwing stations. This scenario also



▲ Blending XF-10 Flat Brown, with the grey primer to simulate the wooden deck effect.





▲ **Stay determined; it's not the mistakes we make, but the way we fix them that counts – the rear fuselage is masked to repair damaged paint.**

matched the Arma Hobby deck base. While Tamiya's decals were somewhat reluctant to separate from their backing sheet, a soak in warmer water resulted in them sliding into position and bedding well into the surface detail, aided by Micro Set and Sol solutions. Sadly, SuperScale's items were less compliant, with notable silvering, which required remedial attention.

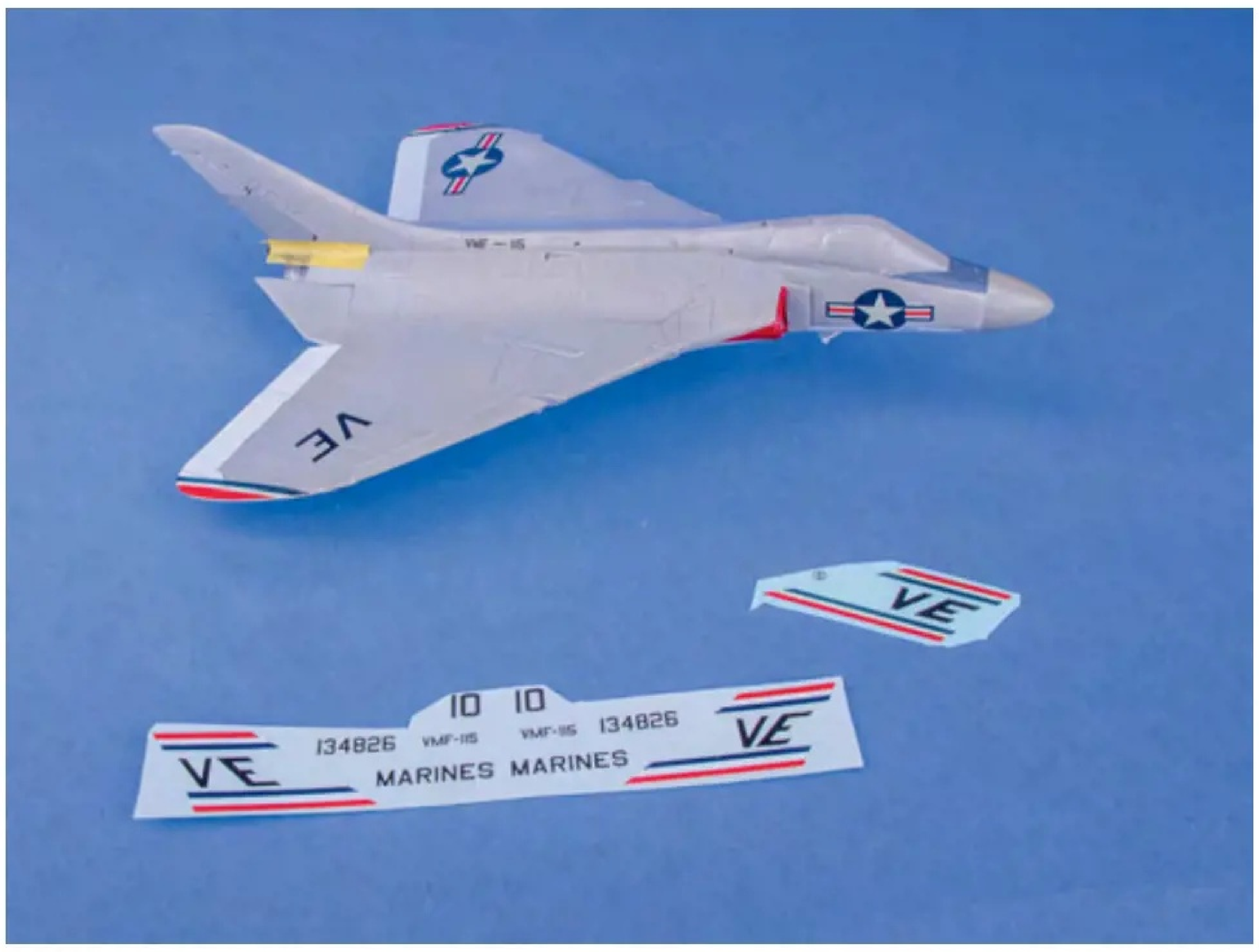
Having chosen a USMC example, this did present a weathering opportunity, with US Navy airframes being notably cleaner, despite their periods at sea. That said, while oils and pastels were used over a misted coat of Alclad's Klear Kote Matt, it would not have done to go overboard – to coin a naval phrase – with the weathering. Having read the Squadron records online, the Marines of VMF(AW)-115 really did wring out their mounts and flew many hours in pursuit of their taskings. ▶

"Tamiya's splendid 1/72 F4D Skyray – which is perfectly suited to being built in a weekend for a newcomer – re-invigorated the enthusiasm of all of those involved"

T-CUT
The Original Restorer

▲ **Rather than spray a coat of gloss varnish for the decals, T-cutting the paint preserves the surface detail and gives a gloss sheen.**

▲ **The nose gear was pinned through the aluminium tube to provide strength.**



▲ **Despite the differences in relative thickness, the kit's decals performed better than the old SuperScale sheet.**

REFERENCES:

Warpaint Series 117: Douglas F4D/F-6 Skyray & F5D Skylancer, by Tony Buttler AMRAeS (Guideline)
www.marines.mil/Portals/1/A History of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 115 PCN 19000310100_1.pdf

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

Alclad (https://alclad2.com)
ALC-313 Klear Kote Matte

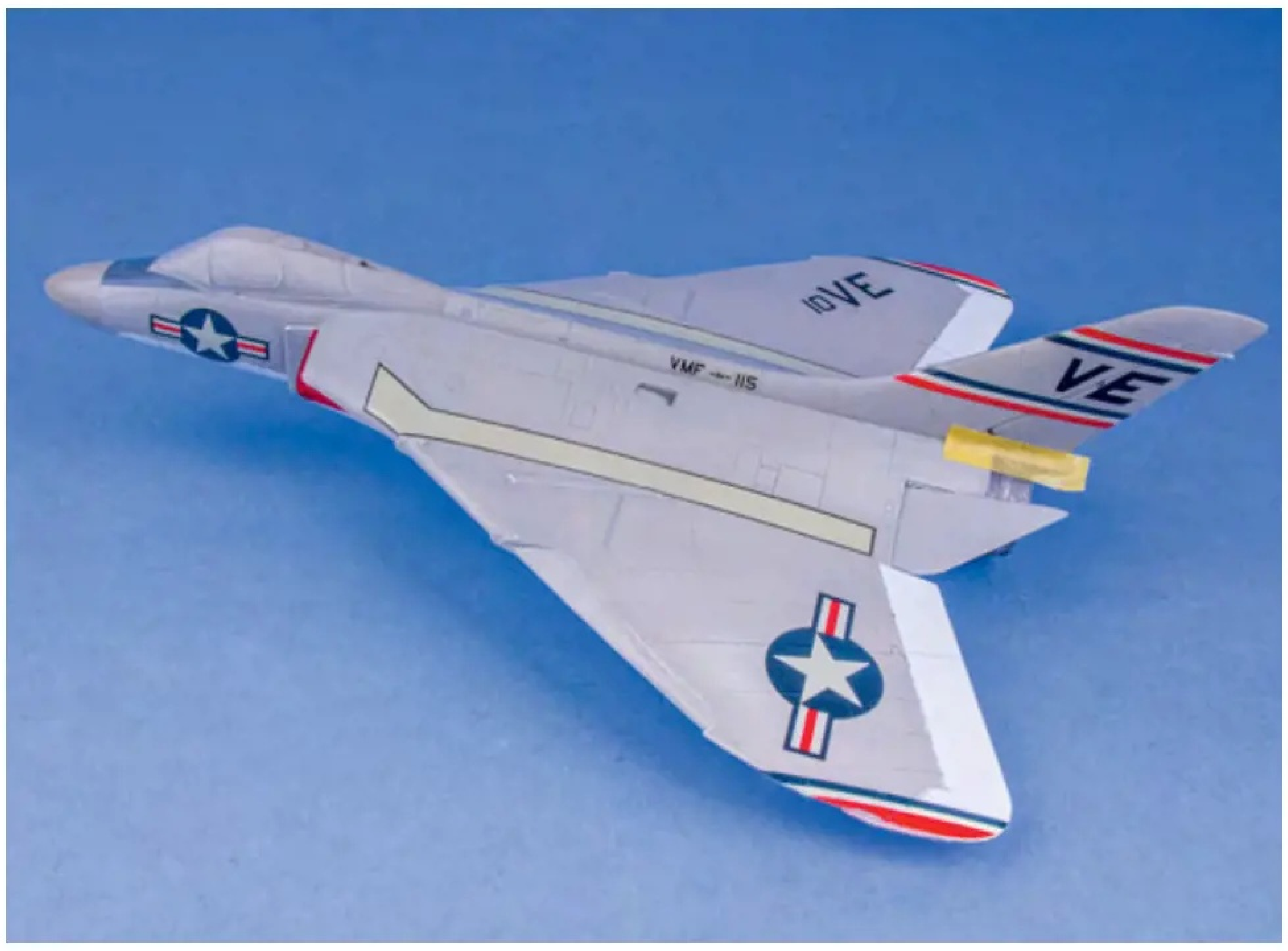
Halfords (www.halfords.com)
Grey Primer
White Primer

Hataka (www.hataka-hobby.com)
HTK-A048 FS 36440 Light Gull Gray

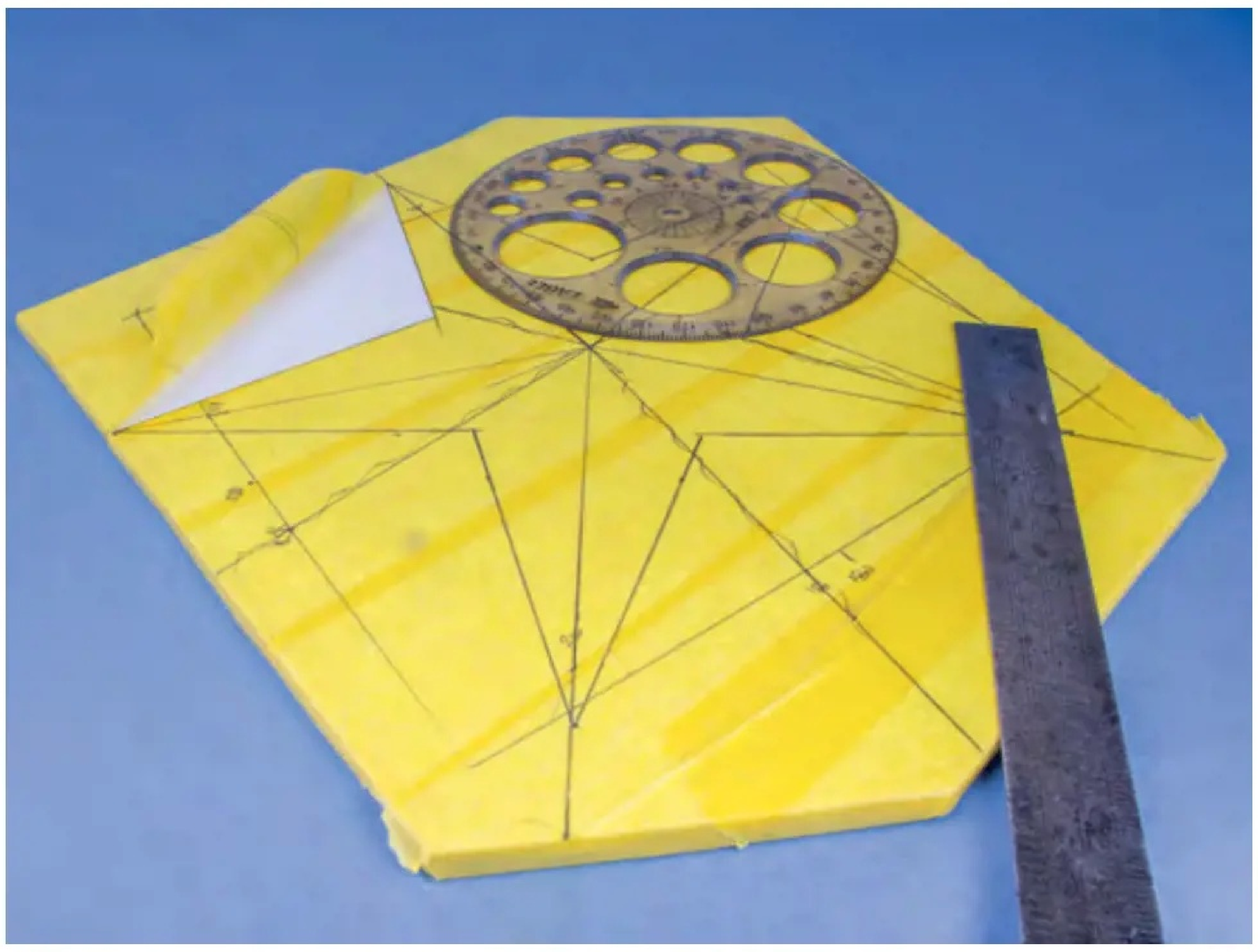
Tamiya (www.hobbyco.net)
XF-55 Deck Tan
XF-10 Flat Brown
XF-66 Light Grey

Build (a) base

All that remained was to add the fiddly items. The pylons slotted into their locating holes, followed by the altered landing gear, plus tail bumper and arrester hook. This wasn't the first time I'd created a carrier-deck scene; previously, the arrestor cable was fashioned from superglue-immersed waxed thread to make it rigid. This time, it was decided to use either 0.3mm and 0.5mm carbon-fibre rod, although it took some time to determine which of these was more suitable for the 1in to 1⅝in diameter cables – eventually the former was selected. After adding the carbon rod to the hook, it was simplicity itself to run a pencil along the already greasy-metal coloured part to impart a suitably metallic sheen. The Arma Hobby base was then treated with Halford's Grey Primer, which matched the deck's anti-slip paint, followed by a blotchy coat of Tamiya XF-10 Flat Brown to simulate the hardwood deck, which was sanded lightly to blend the colours. Tamiya Light Grey then was brushed on top, streaking paint in the direction of the prevailing wind (from the bow). An angled centreline was masked and painted, before the deck was weathered heavily. Tie-down channels were dusted in rust-coloured pastels and the metal given a used sheen, again using a graphite pencil. Bow-springs for the carbon cable were manufactured from old, flattened wire. Further calculations were needed to set the star geometry for the base, with a symmetrical mask eventually reached… accompanied by various Anglo-Saxon expletives.



▲ The previously removed rudder must be tacked into position before the vertical stabiliser decals could be added.


▲ Creating the base required use of a ruler, protractor and a fair degree of dodgy public maths… the old adage of 'measure twice, cut once' was most appropriate!

Who won?

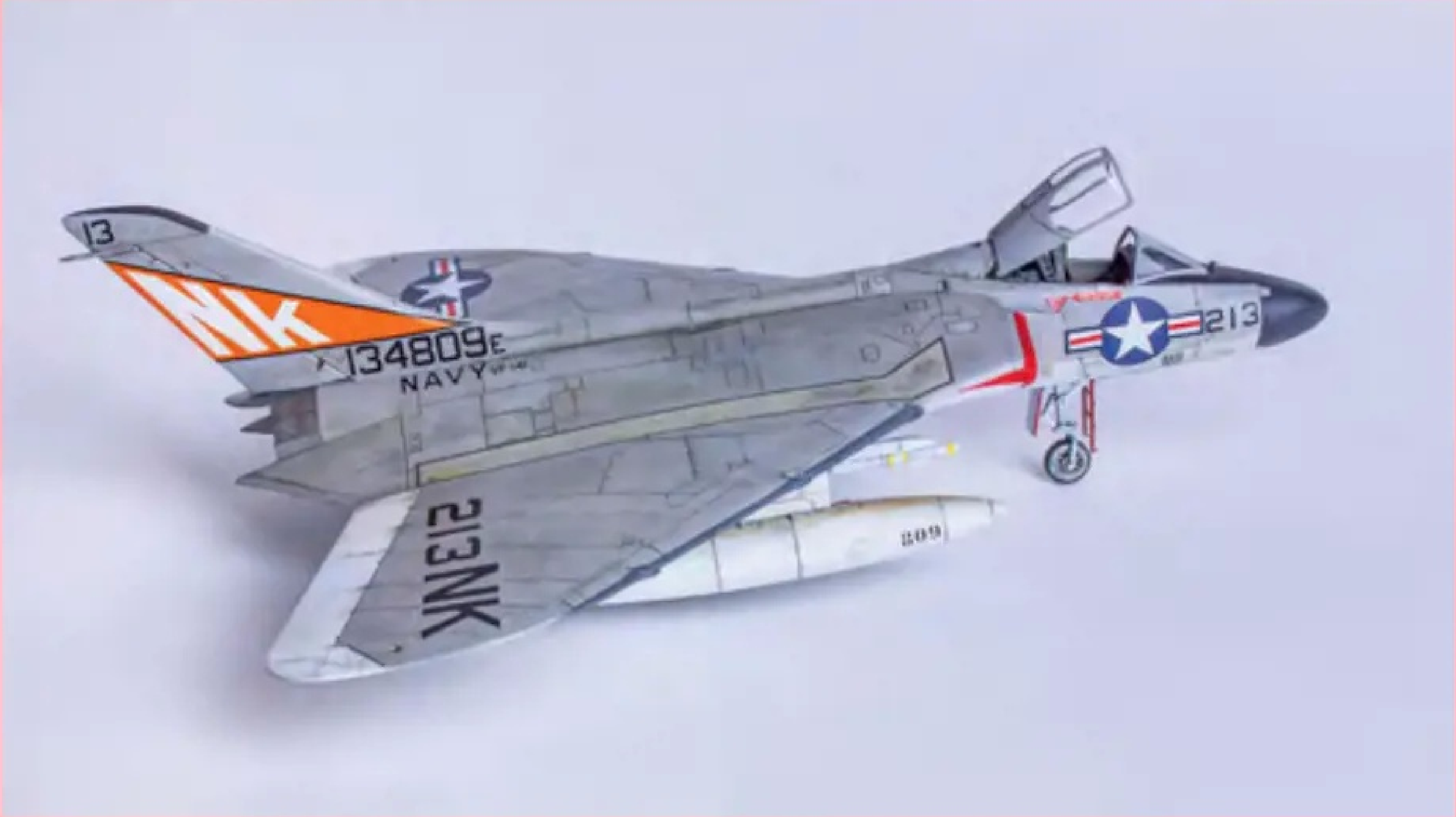
At the time of writing the results had not yet been published, although despite the braggadocio, it was understood from the outset that this challenge was purely for the joy of building. Tamiya's splendid 1/72 F4D Skyray – which is perfectly suited to being built in a weekend for a newcomer – re-invigorated the enthusiasm of all of those involved. We enjoyed the camaraderie of the friendly rivalry and the banter and laughter that this generated between the members of our club, plus discussing a mutual topic of interest that stimulated learning and fired our imaginations… in which case everyone was a winner.

▲ Arrester-cable bow-springs were flattened from old wire as this had a suitable patina.

▲ A quick and easy way of improving the appearance of the cannon barrels is to open them with a small drill bit.

ANOTHER CONTENDER

Fellow Ipswich club member Dom Stevenson's build featured a USS Ranger-based VF-141 'Iron Angels' machine.



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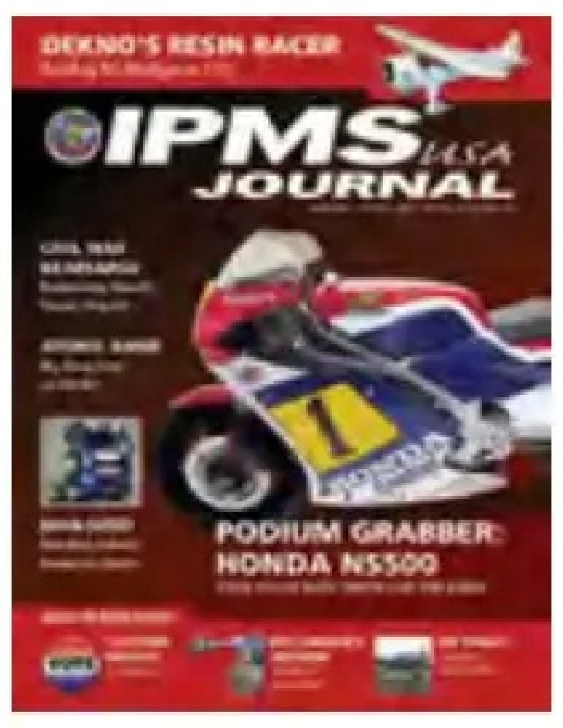

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Large-scale PUMA

Garry Tobiss takes on a big cat in building the superb Das Werk 1/16 Sd.Kfz.234/2 Puma armoured car

The Sd.Kfz. 234 series of armoured cars was built by Germany during World War Two. Its design centred on eight large roadwheels, a Tatra diesel engine, light armour all round and a top speed of just 56mph, which was impressive for such a large vehicle. One curious feature of the type was the ability of the driver to swap to an additional rear-facing seat to drive quickly in the opposite direction. Four different Sd.Kfz. 234 variants were manufactured between 1943-45, with a total production run of approximately 478 units. The initial 234/1 was armed with a 2cm KwK 38, while the 234/2 (the subject of this build) was equipped with a 5cm KwK 39 gun in an enclosed turret. The 234/3 featured a short-barrelled 7.5cm KwK 51, and the 234/4 had a long-barrelled 7.5cm PaK 40 anti-tank gun.

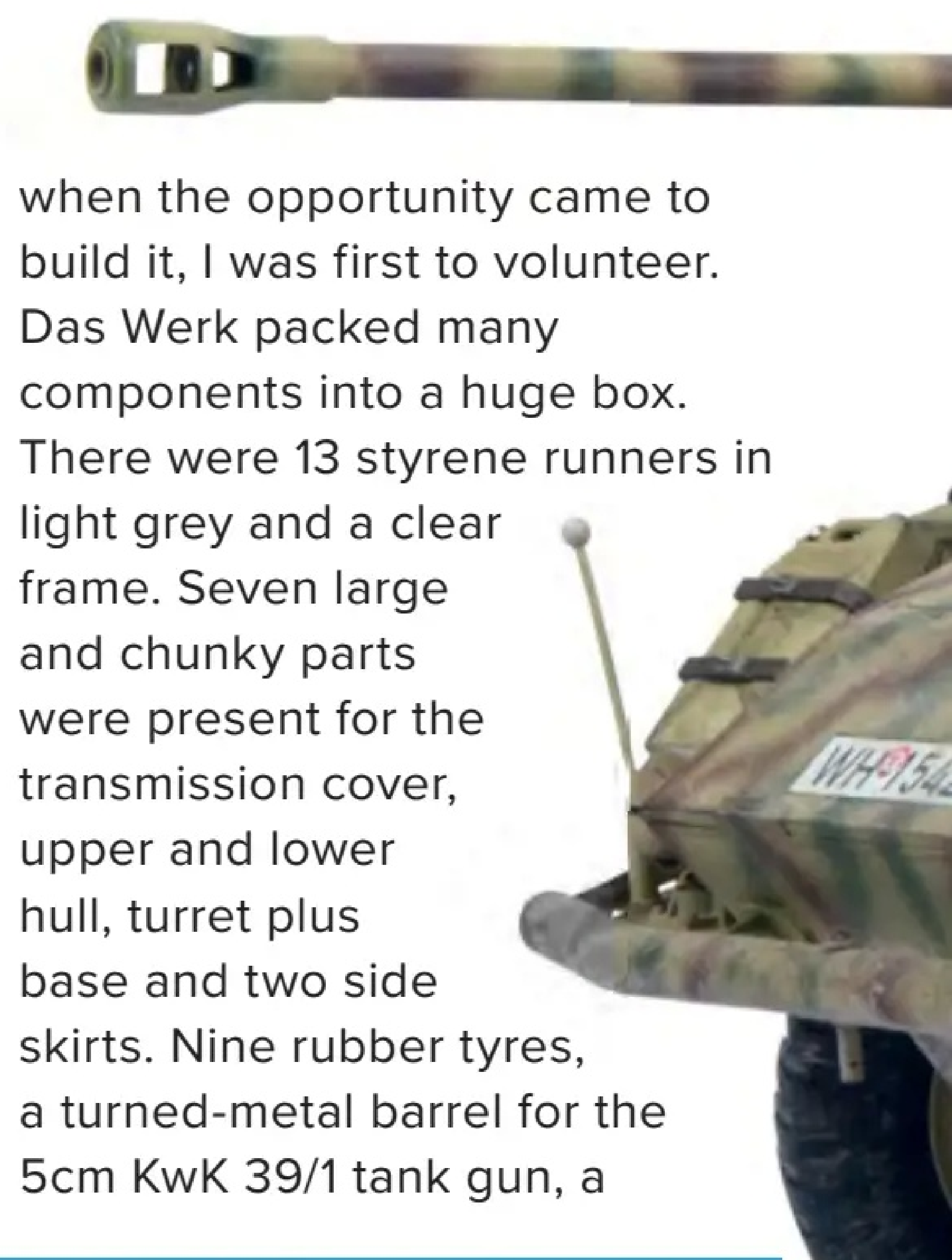
MODEL SPEC

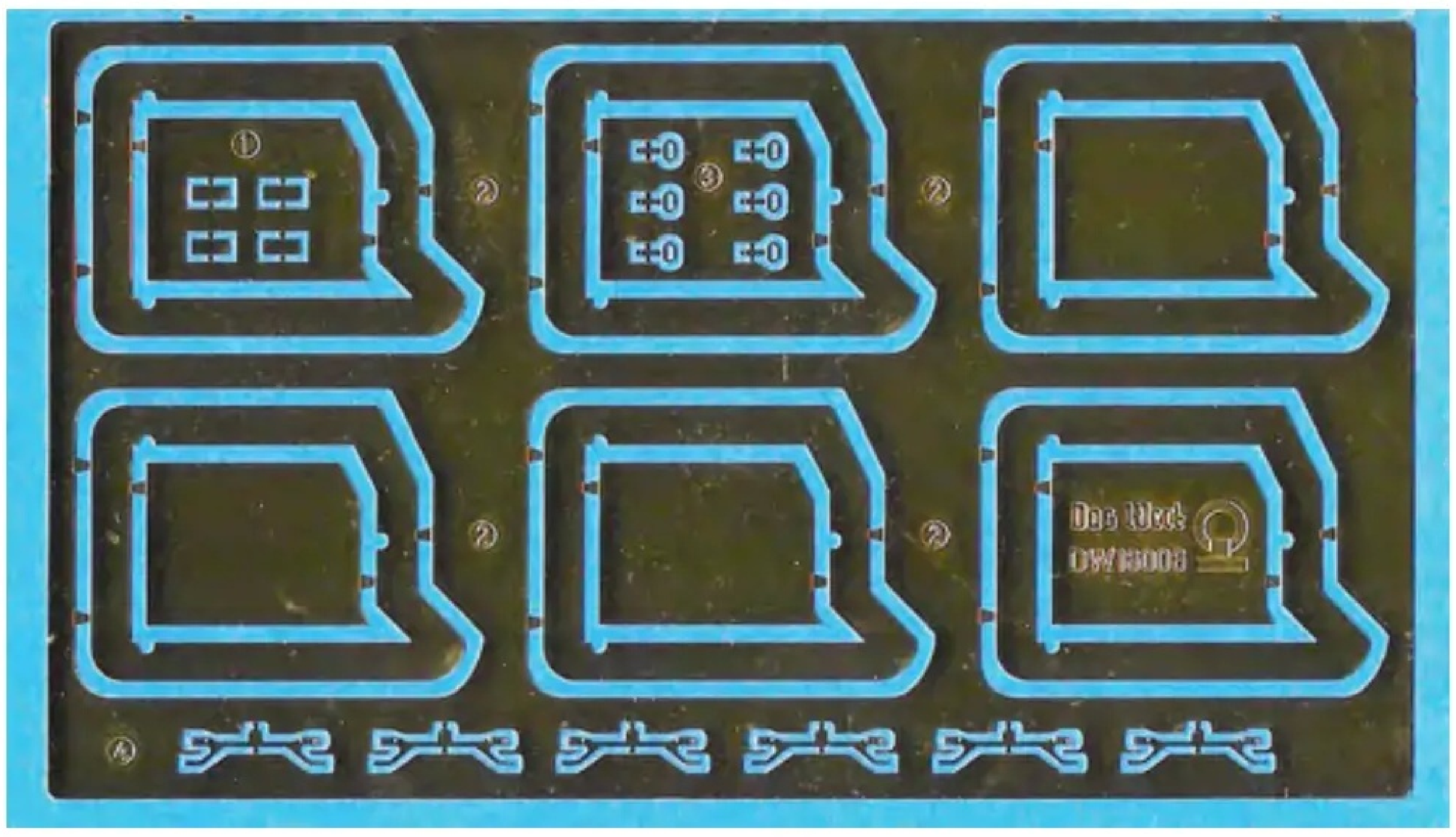
Sd.Kfz.234/2 Puma
By: Das Werk
Stock code: DW16006
Scale: 1/16
Price: £119
Available from: Albion Hobbies (www.albionhobbies.com)

Das Werk
Sd.Kfz. 234/2 „Puma"
1/16

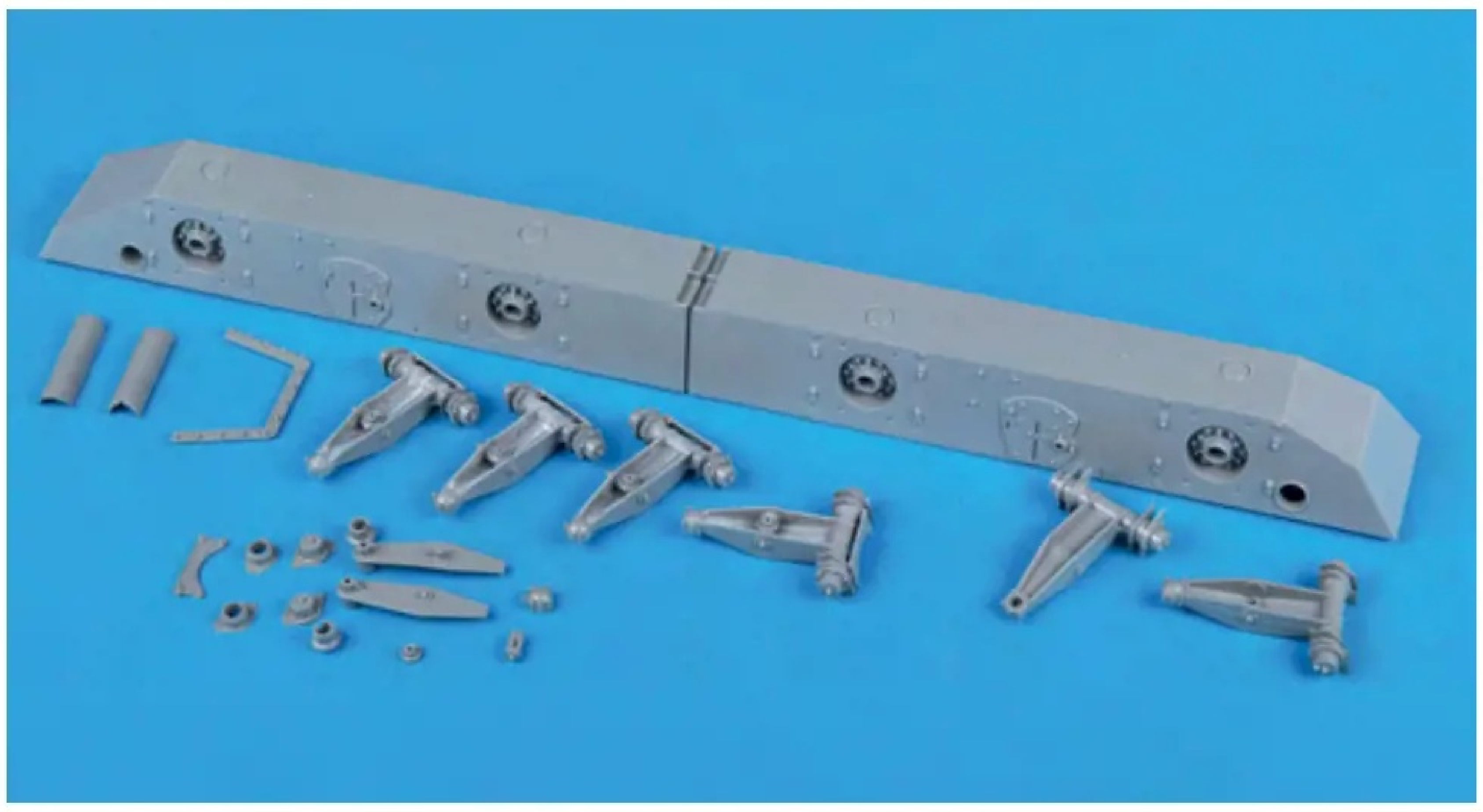
Puma paws

It's strange how some subjects capture your imagination; I remember as a child seeing the Matchbox 1/76 Puma, with its cool street diorama and thinking what a great vehicle it was. Fast-forward many years to Scale ModelWorld, Telford 2023, where Albion Hobbies had a prototype of the Das Werk 1/16 kit, which looked superb. So, when the opportunity came to build it, I was first to volunteer. Das Werk packed many components into a huge box. There were 13 styrene runners in light grey and a clear frame. Seven large and chunky parts were present for the transmission cover, upper and lower hull, turret plus base and two side skirts. Nine rubber tyres, a turned-metal barrel for the 5cm KwK 39/1 tank gun, a

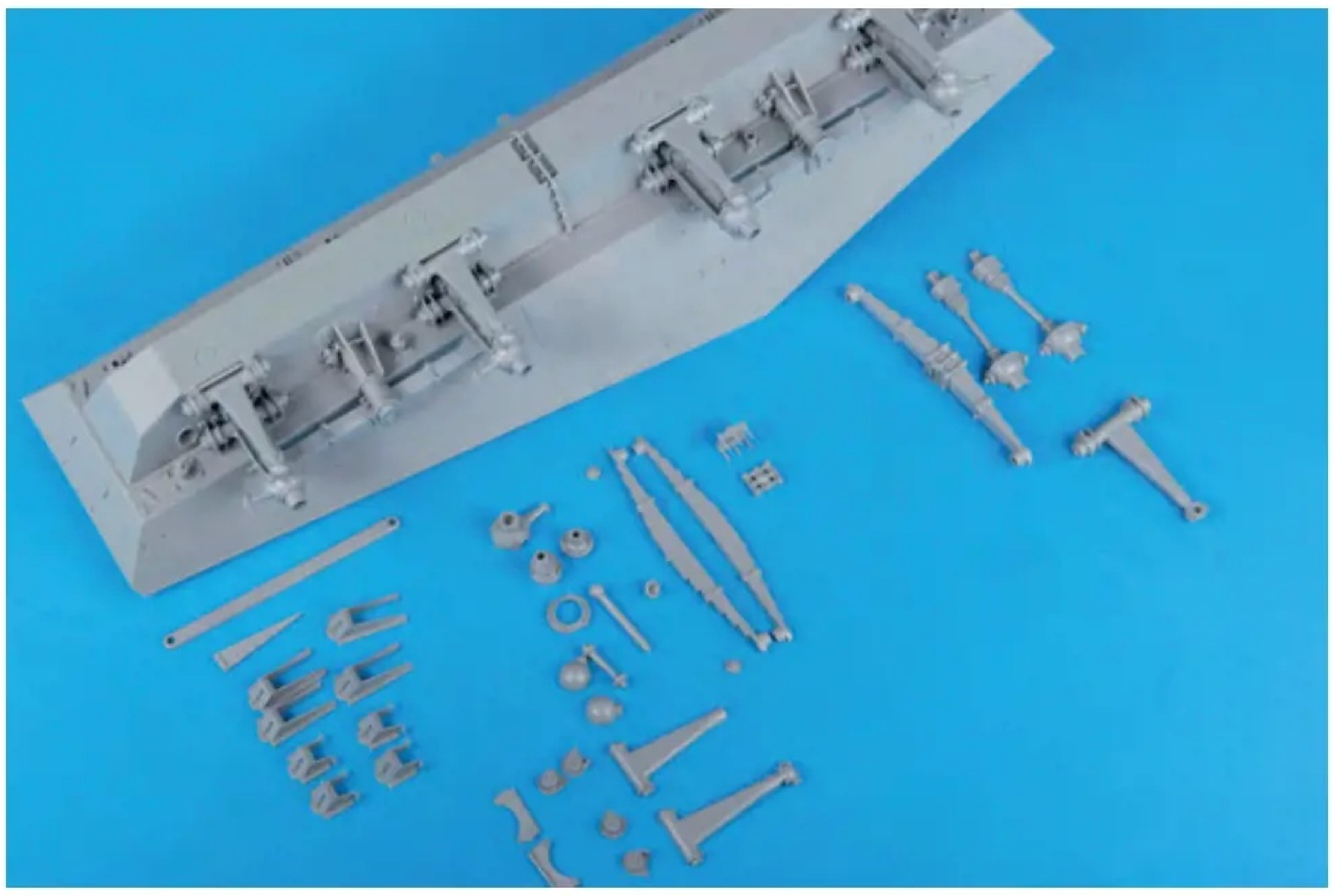




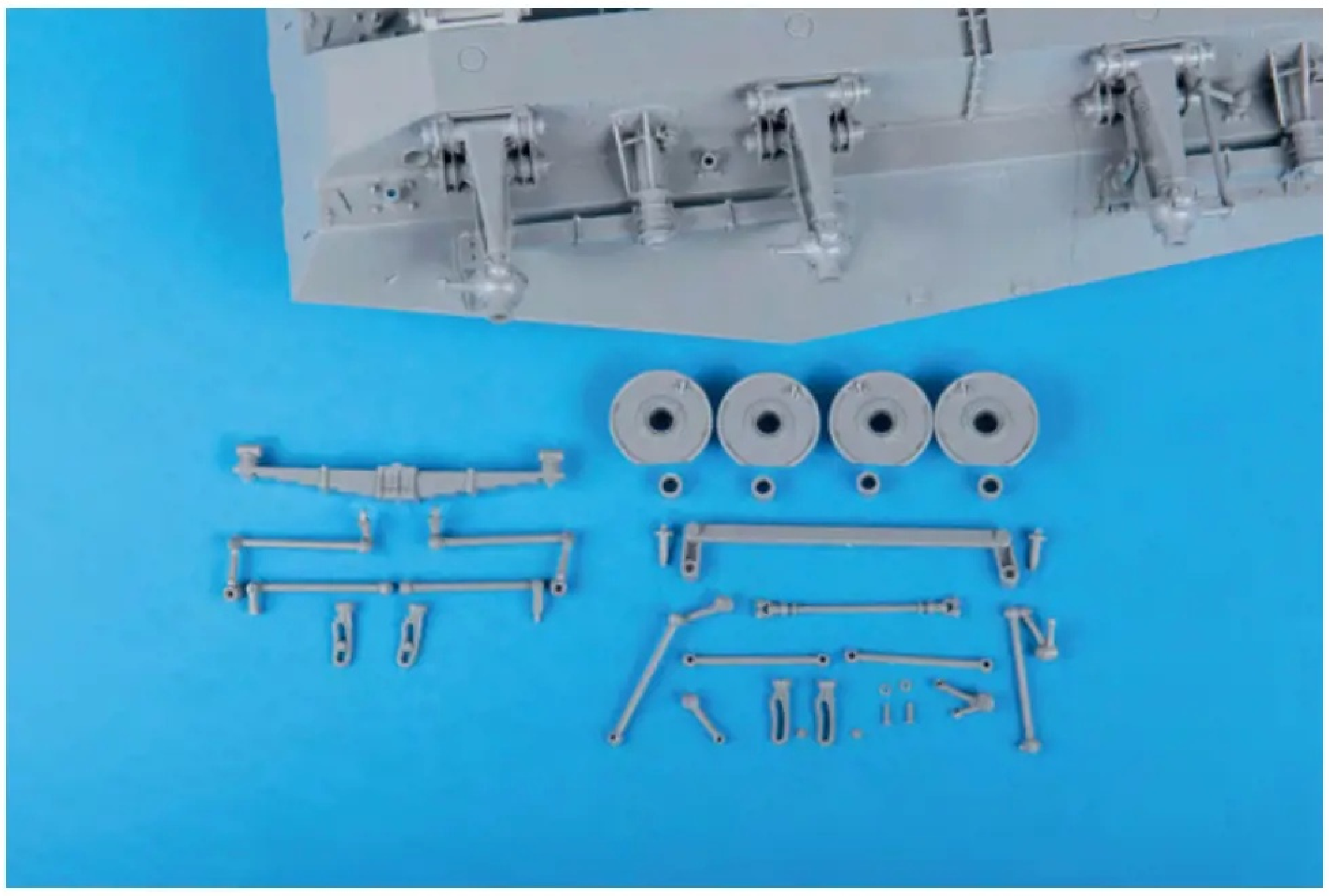
▲ A small PE fret was supplied, mainly providing the seams for the jerrycans plus fasteners for some of the storage boxes.



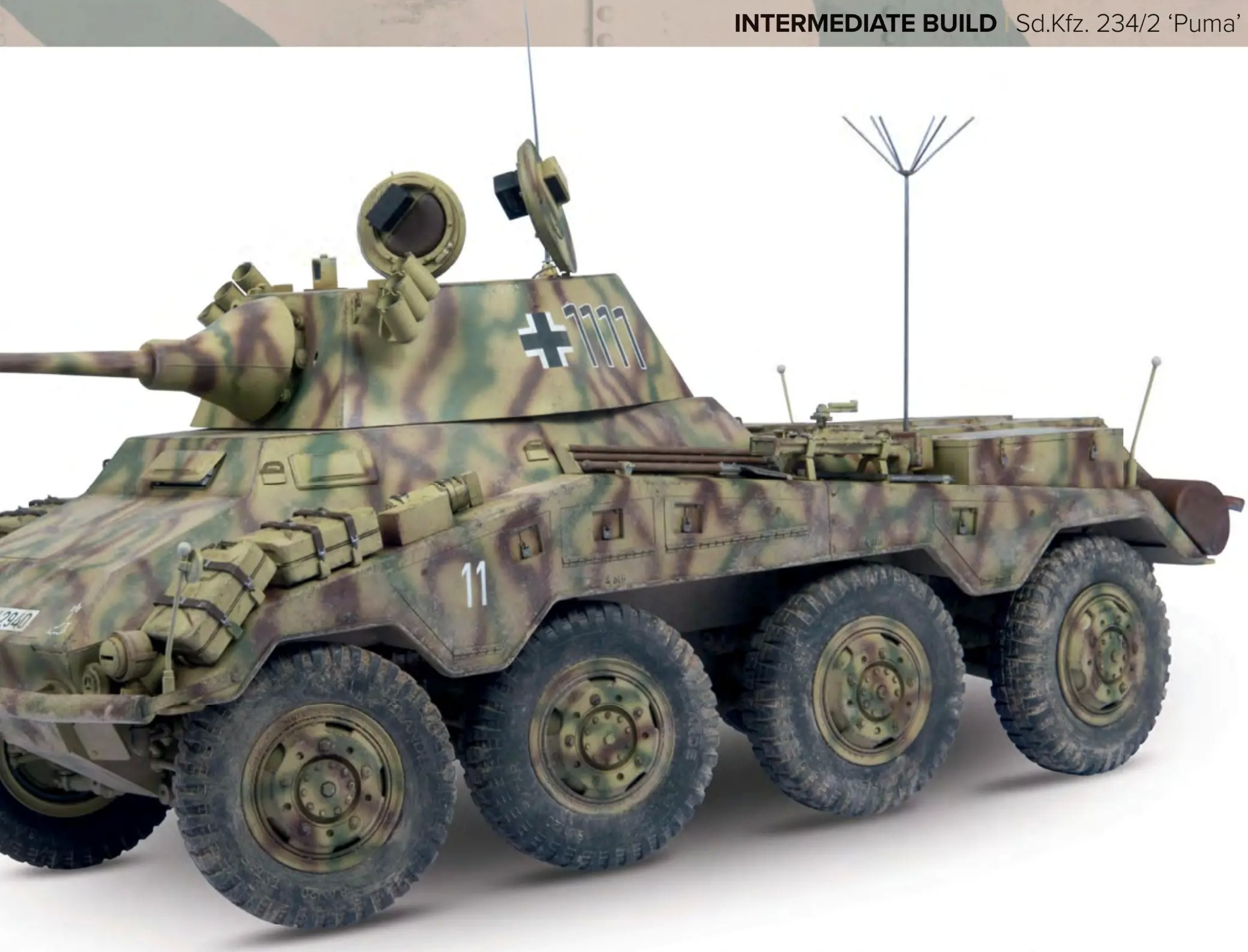
▲ Four of the upper suspension leaves from the 'expert' option, plus one in component form and shown together with the chunky transmission cover. The two simplified parts on the right show the lower, 'standard' level of detail.



▲ The lower suspension, drive shafts and leaf suspension were a similar story. 'Expert' is shown in the middle set, simplified on the right. Far left shows various brackets.



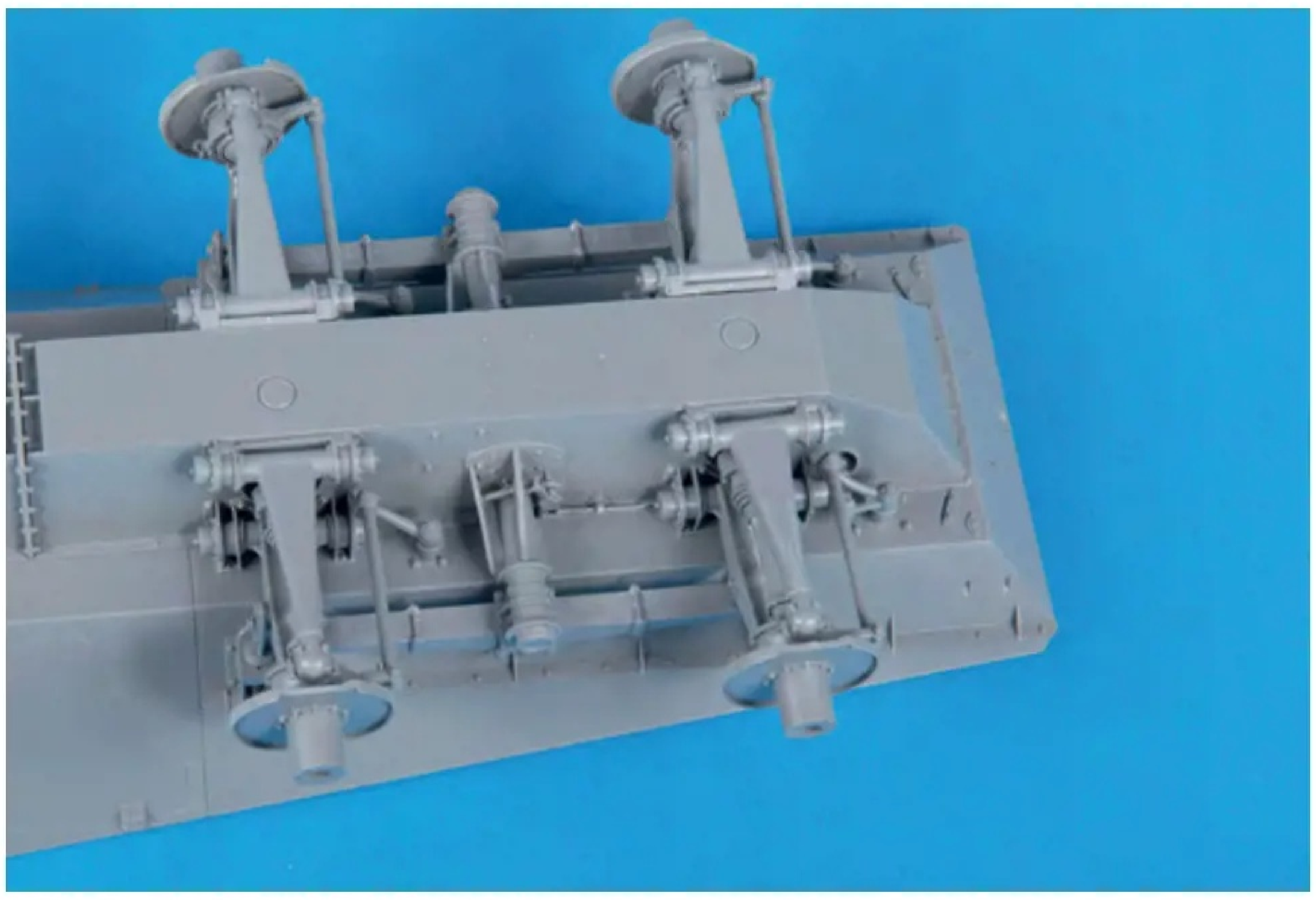
▲ Simplified steering arms were moulded singly (left), with 'expert' as moveable components (right). Note the leaf-spring suspension, the example in the earlier photo is actually an assembled 'expert' version!



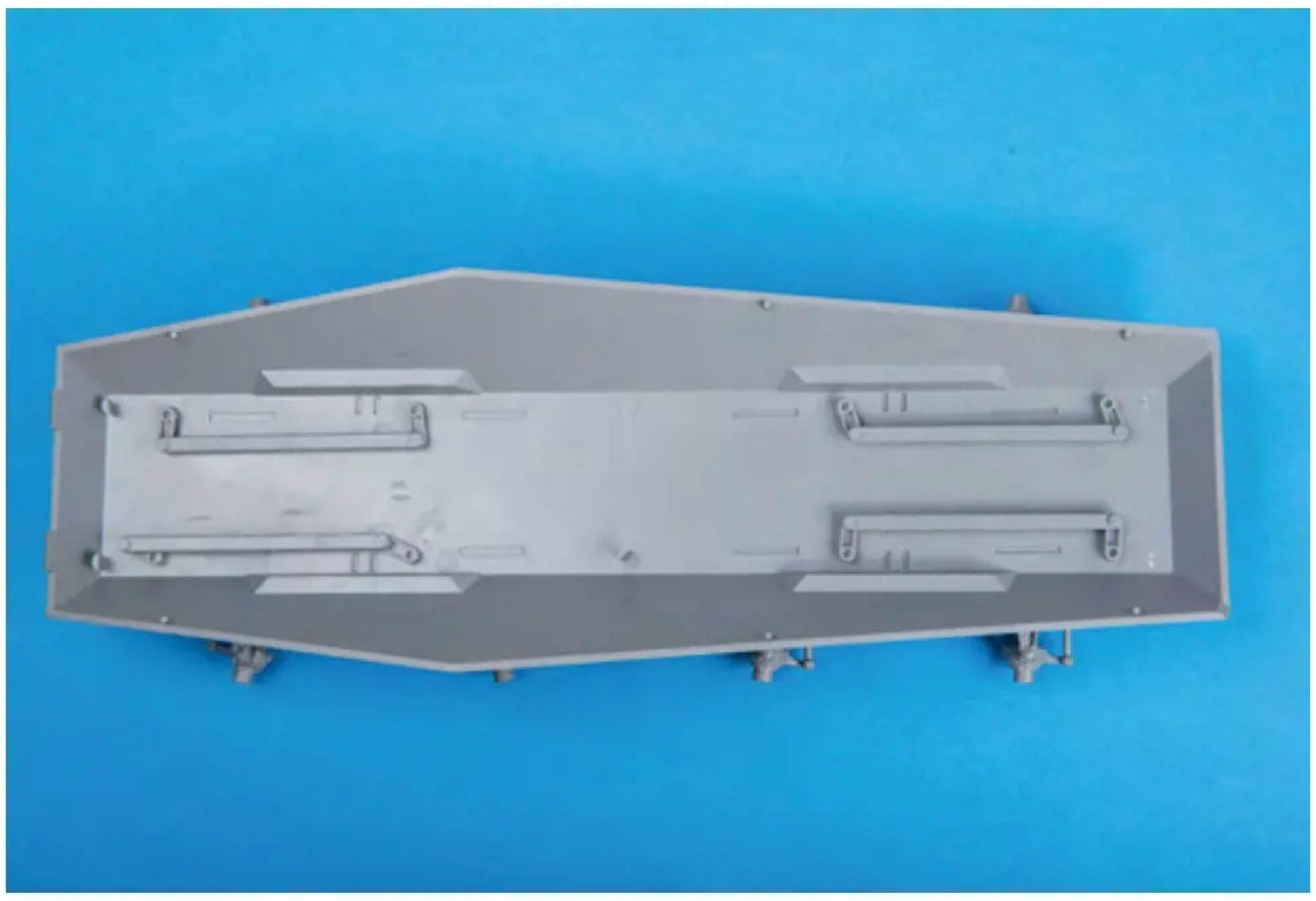
decal sheet, small photo-etched (PE) brass fret, plus a high-quality colour instruction manual completed the package.

There were two options for the suspension: 'expert' meant the use of more detailed components to create two sets of four steerable wheels, with 'standard' offering a more simplified method. Each of the first six instruction steps was split according to the approach taken, with sections ending in 1 (2-1, 3-1) for 'expert', those ending in 2 (2-2, 3-2) for 'standard'.

Construction started with the suspension leaves. 'Expert' meant that each of the lower leaves comprised 12 pieces, 'standard' needing just two. Detail such as the securing nuts was missing on the latter parts, but bear in mind that most was hidden behind the wheels. Note, the 'expert' version was chosen for this build. All suspension components were locked onto the lower hull and the transmission cover. If I was building this kit again, I'd start by glueing the transmission cover to the lower hull first, then attach the other parts directly. This approach was used once I'd realised that aligning each



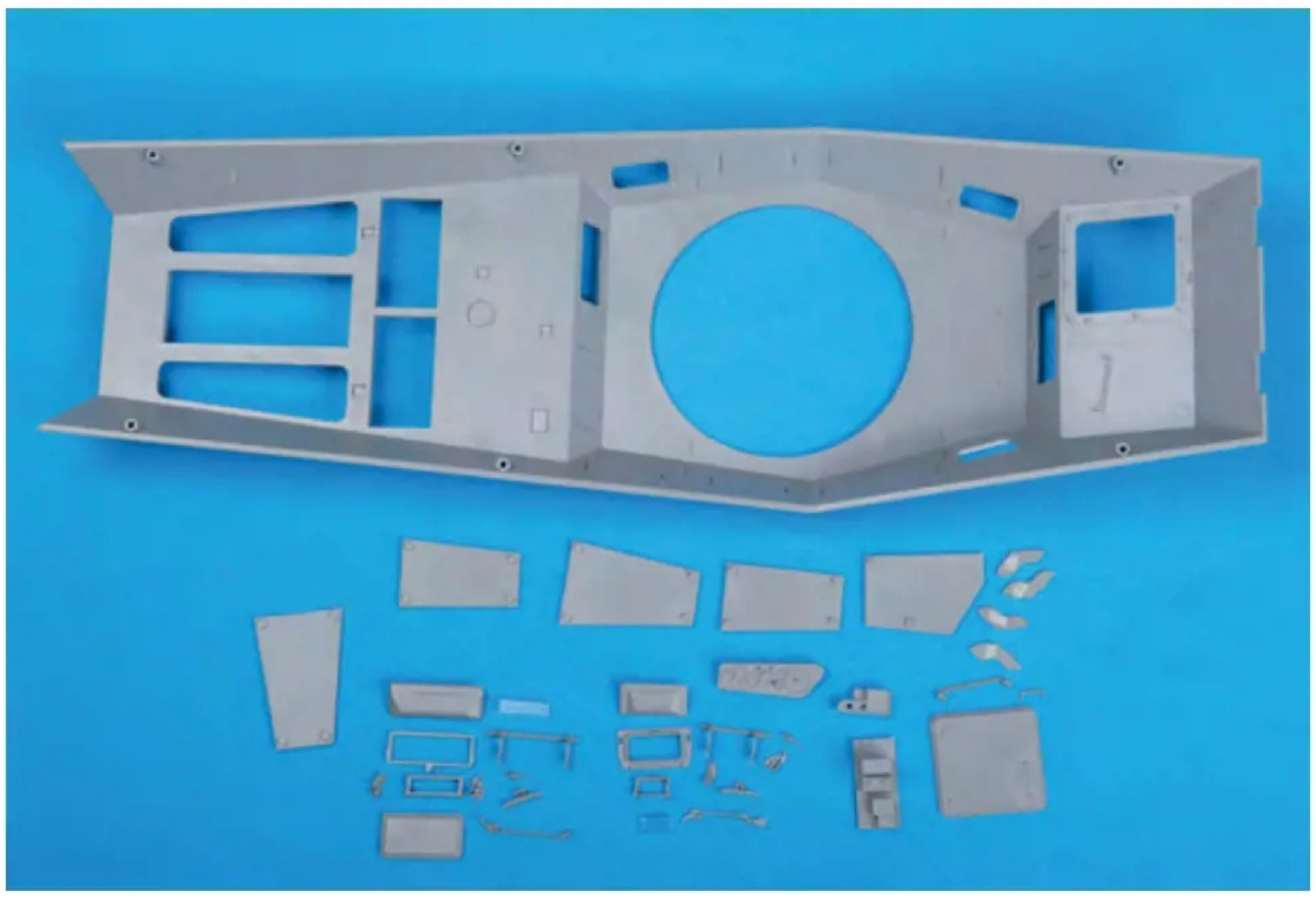
▲ A view showing the completed rear, steerable suspension. Note the brake line for the rear right wheel, the rest of the part plus the brake lines for the other wheels were left off.

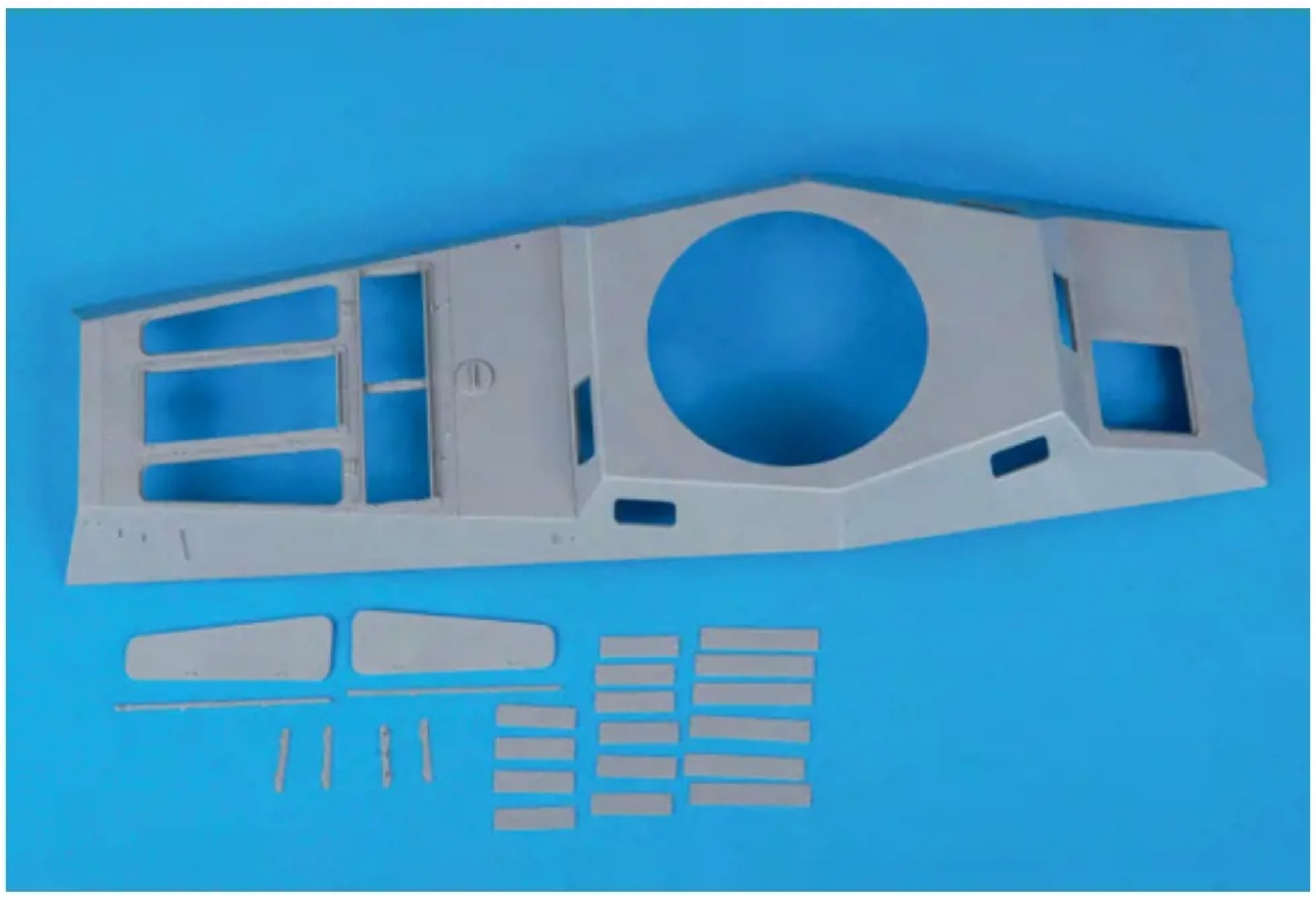


▲ A view of what *not* to do with the pivots for the suspension arms (left) and the correct configuration allowing full movement (right). Luckily this was spotted before any glue was applied.

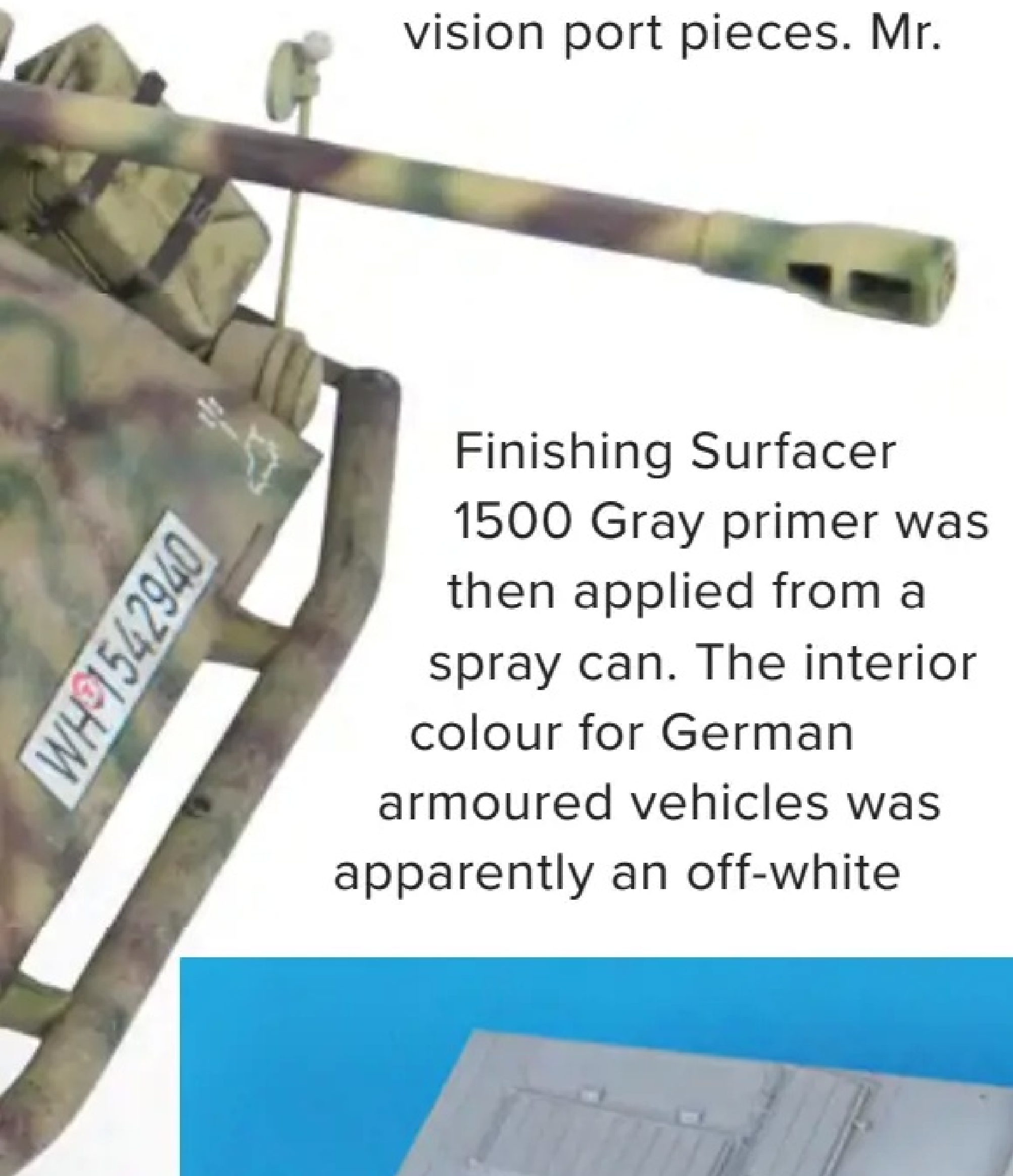
"A degree of interior detail was supplied for the crew compartment"

component precisely was all but impossible. Certain completed sub-assemblies were corrected by separating them carefully with a razor saw, aligning and then re-glueing. It was evident a combination of the construction methods could be used if the object was to save time, yet still have steerable wheels. As long as the ball assemblies identified on Page 4 were used, it didn't matter which version of leaf springs was assembled. For the steerable suspension, just one step indicated that no glue should be applied, but common sense dictated that the ball joints, plus parts G1 (small pins) shouldn't be fixed to the G5 steering arms; it was a similar story for parts F51 and these were snapped together with the linking arms rather than glued. The engineering standard of the kit was superb, but there was one oddity with the brake lines. The instructions were vague on how some were supposed to be installed and it was eventually established that there was an element of trying to thread them behind small gaps in the suspension. Even if this was successful – and both of my attempts resulted in snapped


▲ Moving to the interior, this included armour plates plus vision ports (just two are shown) plus various other items, but no steering wheel or driver seats.


▲ The louvred engine deck at the rear comprised access hatches plus many panels… fiddly to construct, but realistic when completed.

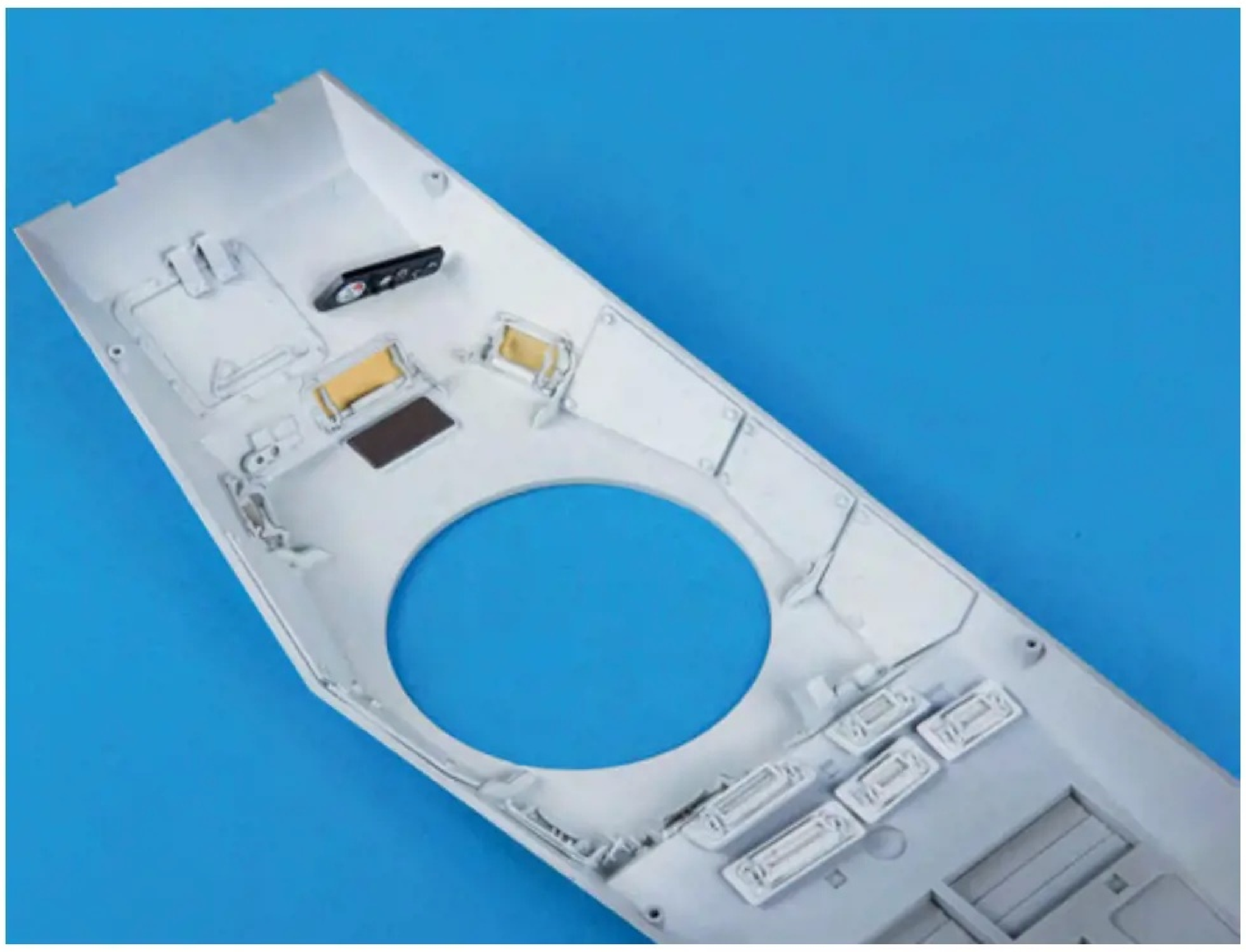
parts – the lines couldn't be attached to the wheels if the latter were to be steerable, so would be left floating. I elected to add just those parts of the lines with good moulded detail and omitted everything else.



Stalking prey

A degree of interior detail was supplied for the crew compartment, so all parts were added bar the external vision port pieces. Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Gray primer was then applied from a spray can. The interior colour for German armoured vehicles was apparently an off-white tone, so Vallejo 70.344 German Tanker White from the Panzer Aces range was utilised. A small instrument panel was provided, but note that the instructions show the dashboard decal dials upside down… I didn't spot this until too late. Hey ho, hopefully no-one will see!

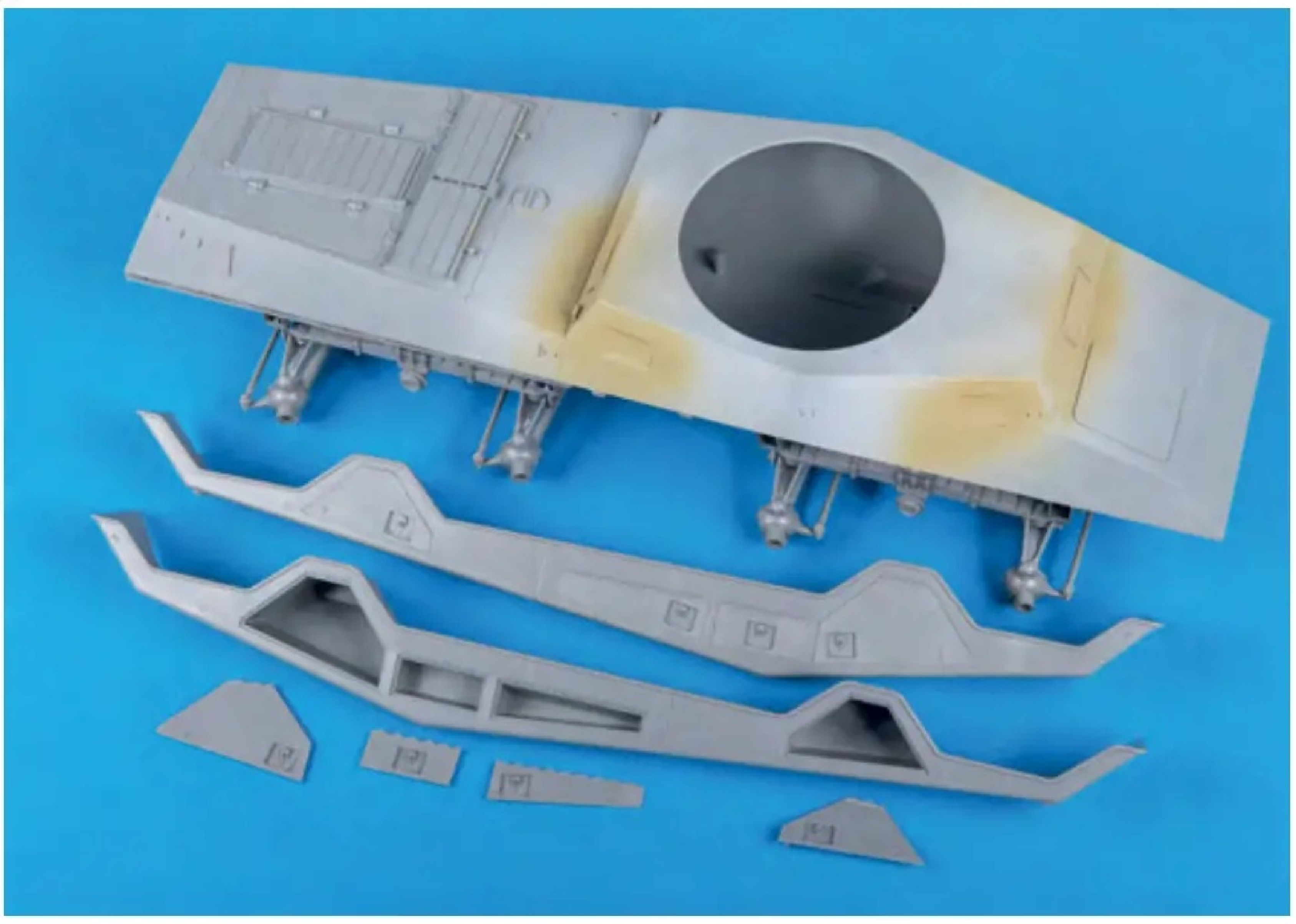
Limited weathering was added via a black pencil before the hull halves were joined. The rear engine deck included solid and louvered covers; the latter comprised two side strips per section, with a series of louvre panels in between. Tolerances were fine, so getting the distance between the two sides even slightly incorrect meant the panels would either be too big or would fall through. Careful assembly resulted in a neat-looking rear deck. Side panels consisted of two large parts with panels for the compartments, each requiring yet more careful alignment to ensure it fitted properly to the hull and, once positioned, the Puma really started to look the part.



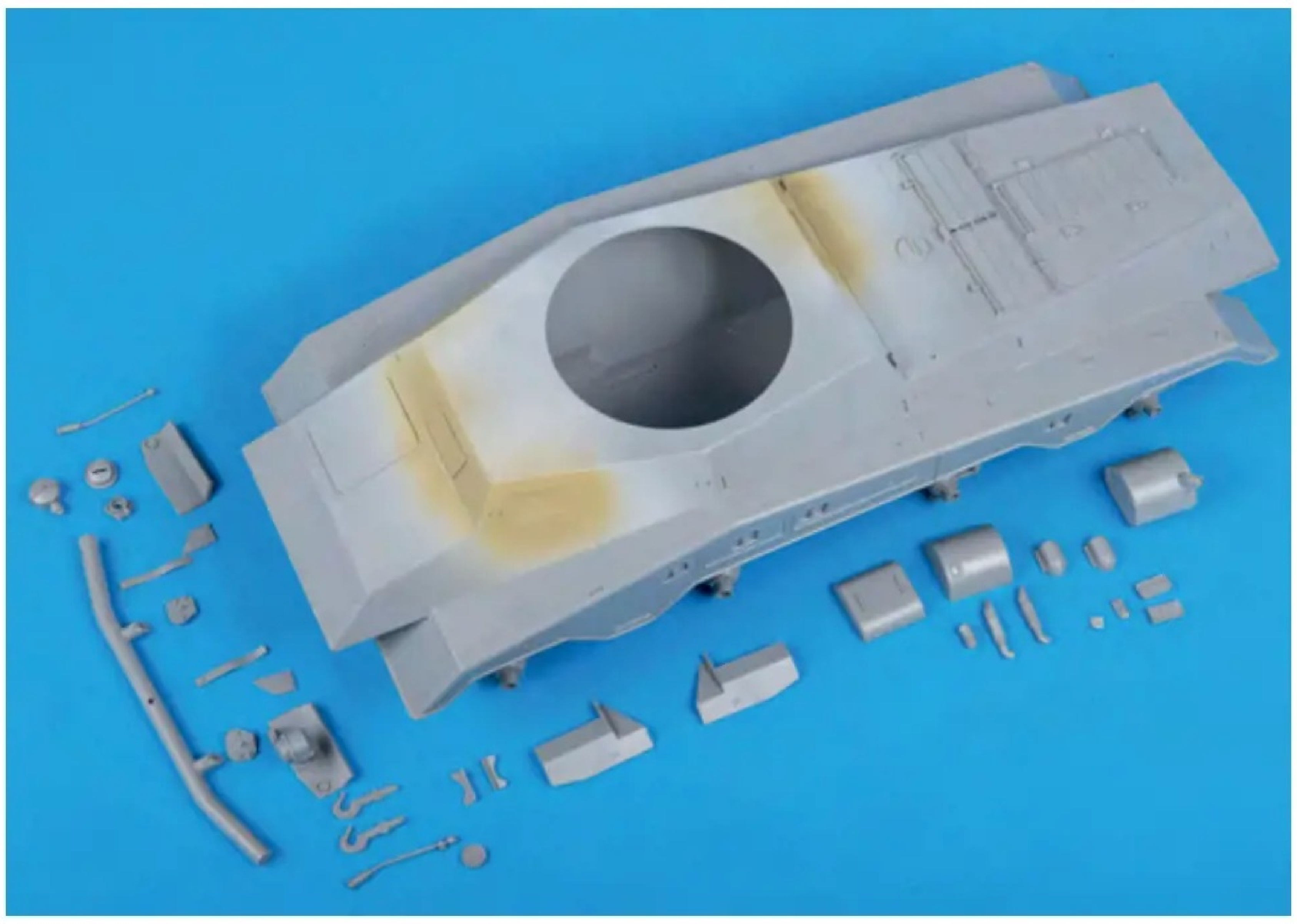
▲ Apart from the gun breech, little of the interior was visible through the turret hatches. Even so, all the detail for the vision ports and dashboard was installed, with chipping effects added via a black pencil.

The front bumper, plus lights and a horn were added next, followed by the rear plate and various storage boxes. Width

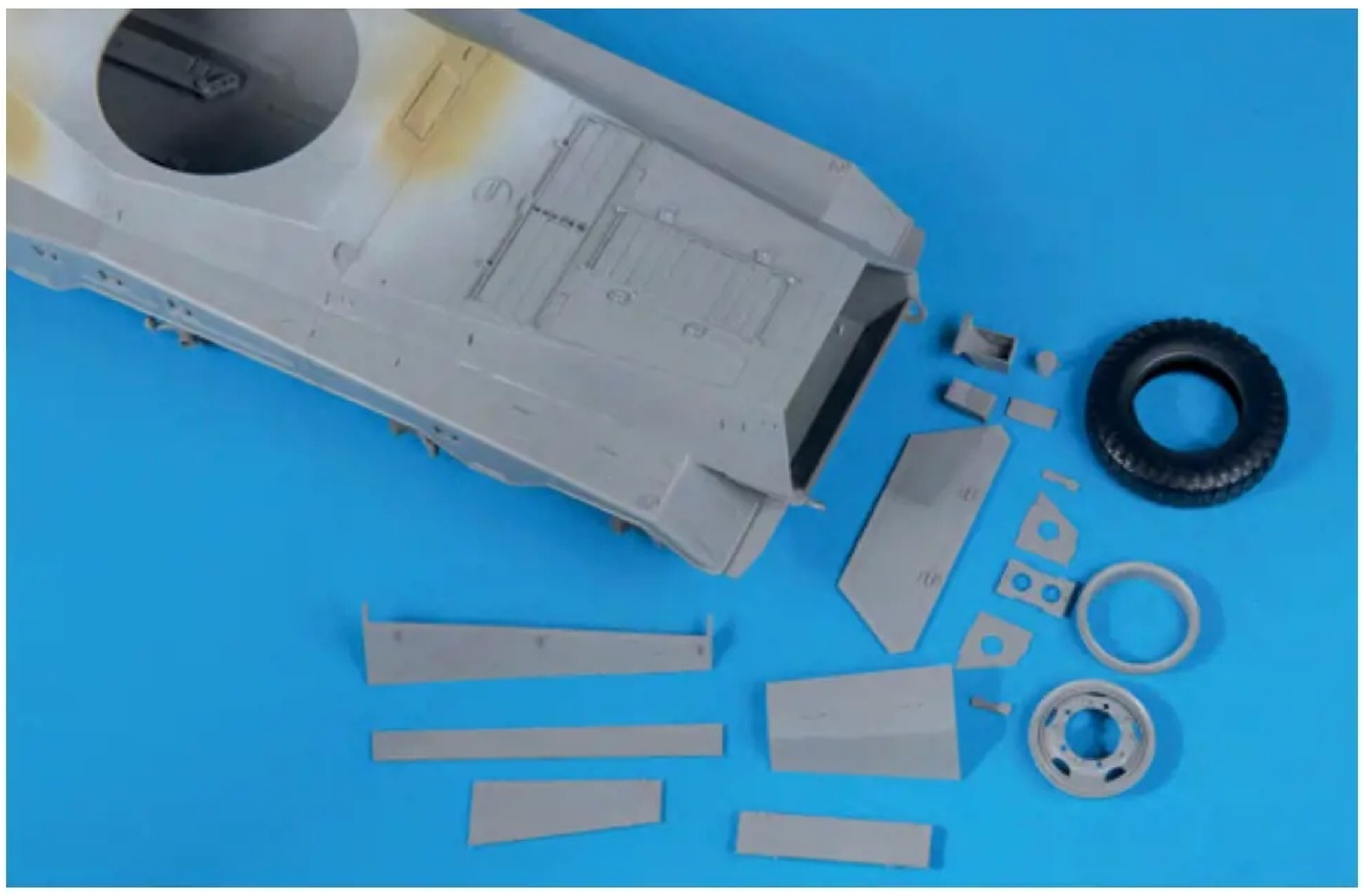
▶



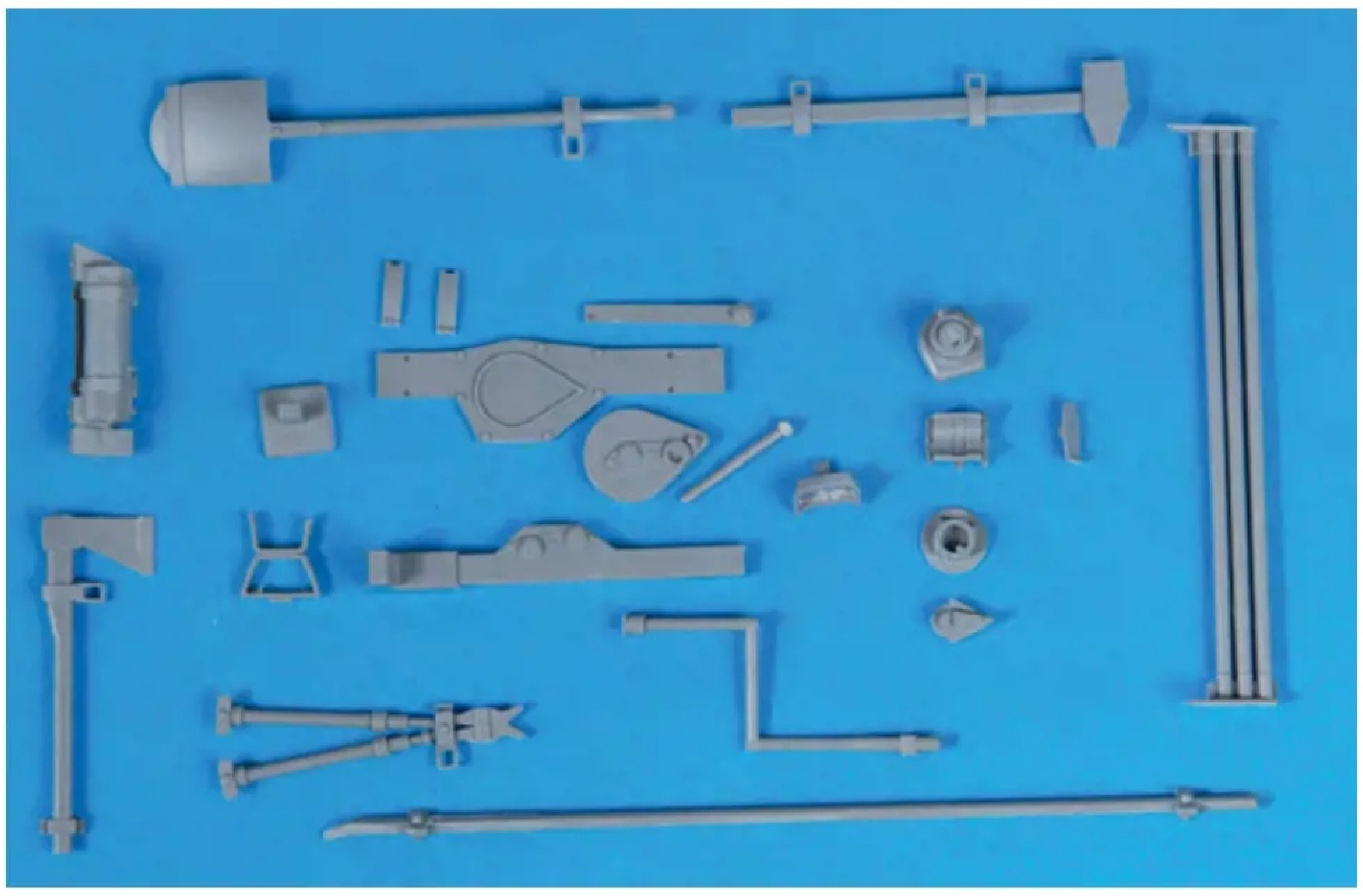
▲ One of the two large side panels with hatches attached and the other with them left to install.



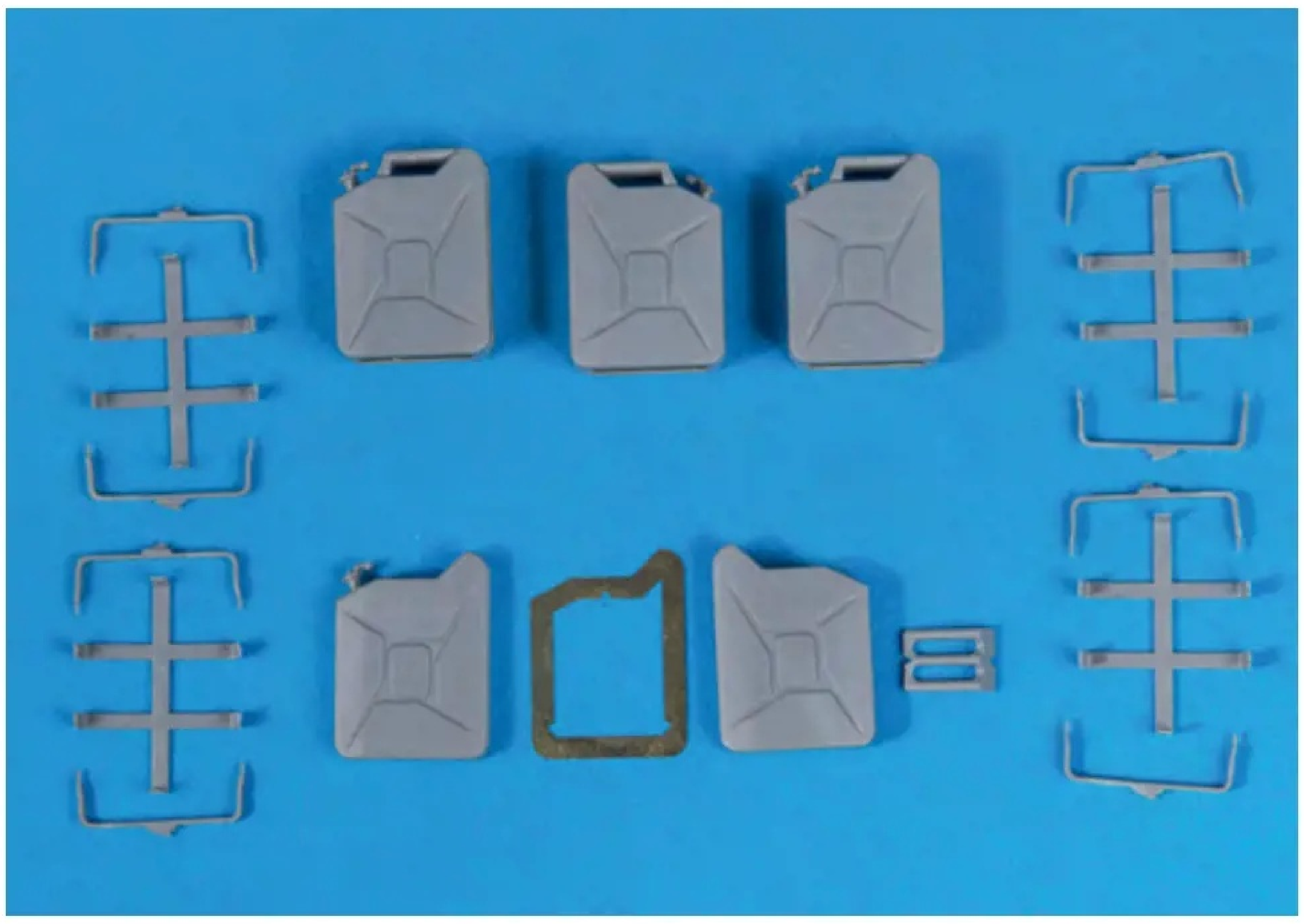
▲ There was a chunky single-piece front bumper. Parts for the light support brackets and exhaust systems are also shown.



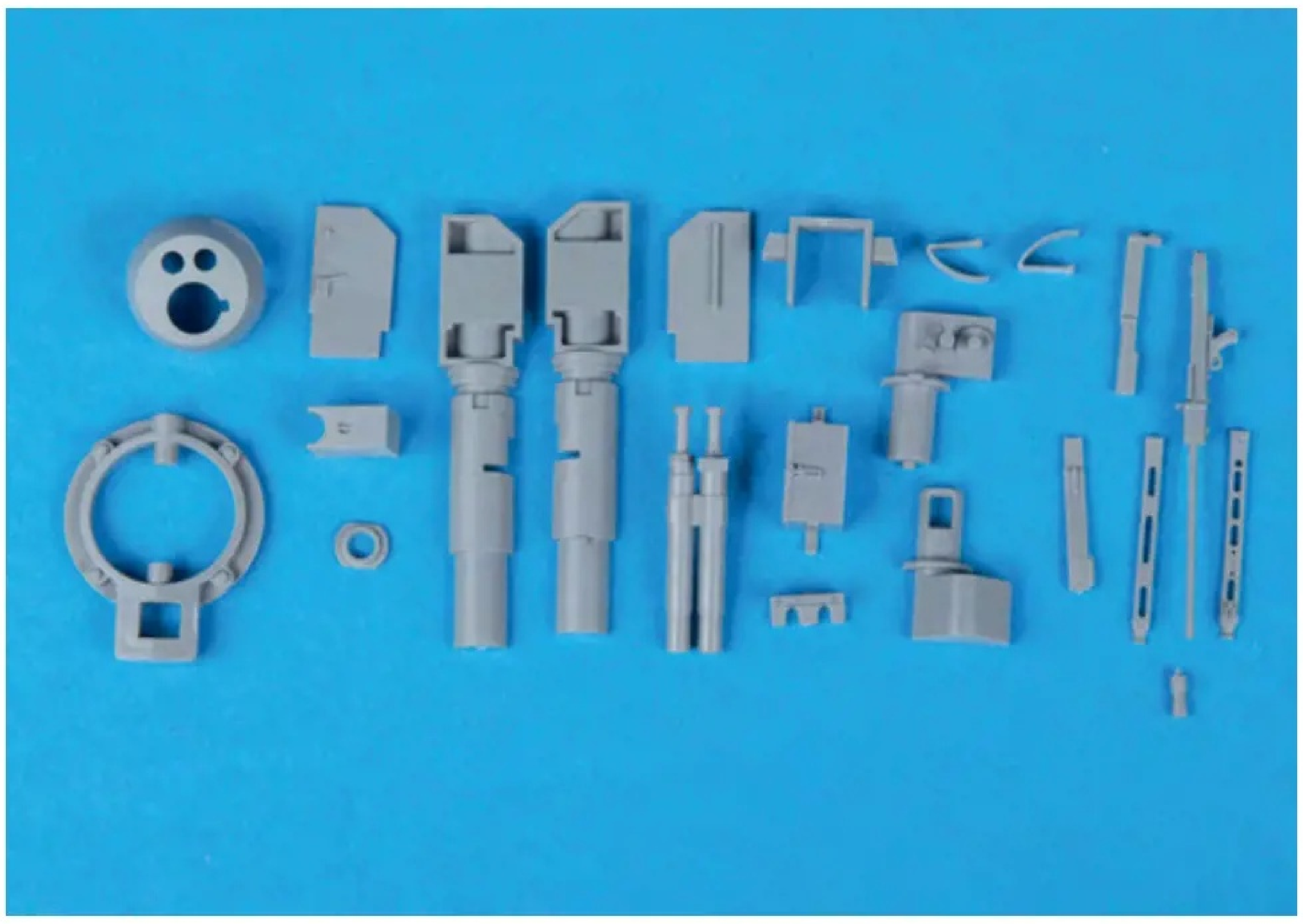
▲ Moving to the rear, there was a hull panel, plus an assembly for the spare wheel. Various storage boxes are also shown prior to their PE fasteners being attached.



▲ A full complement of pioneer tools plus a fire extinguisher and detailed jack assembly were provided. Note the integrally moulded, but detailed fasteners.



▲ Six jerrycans were provided, with four shown here, three assembled and one left as components. Each had finely moulded text on one side.



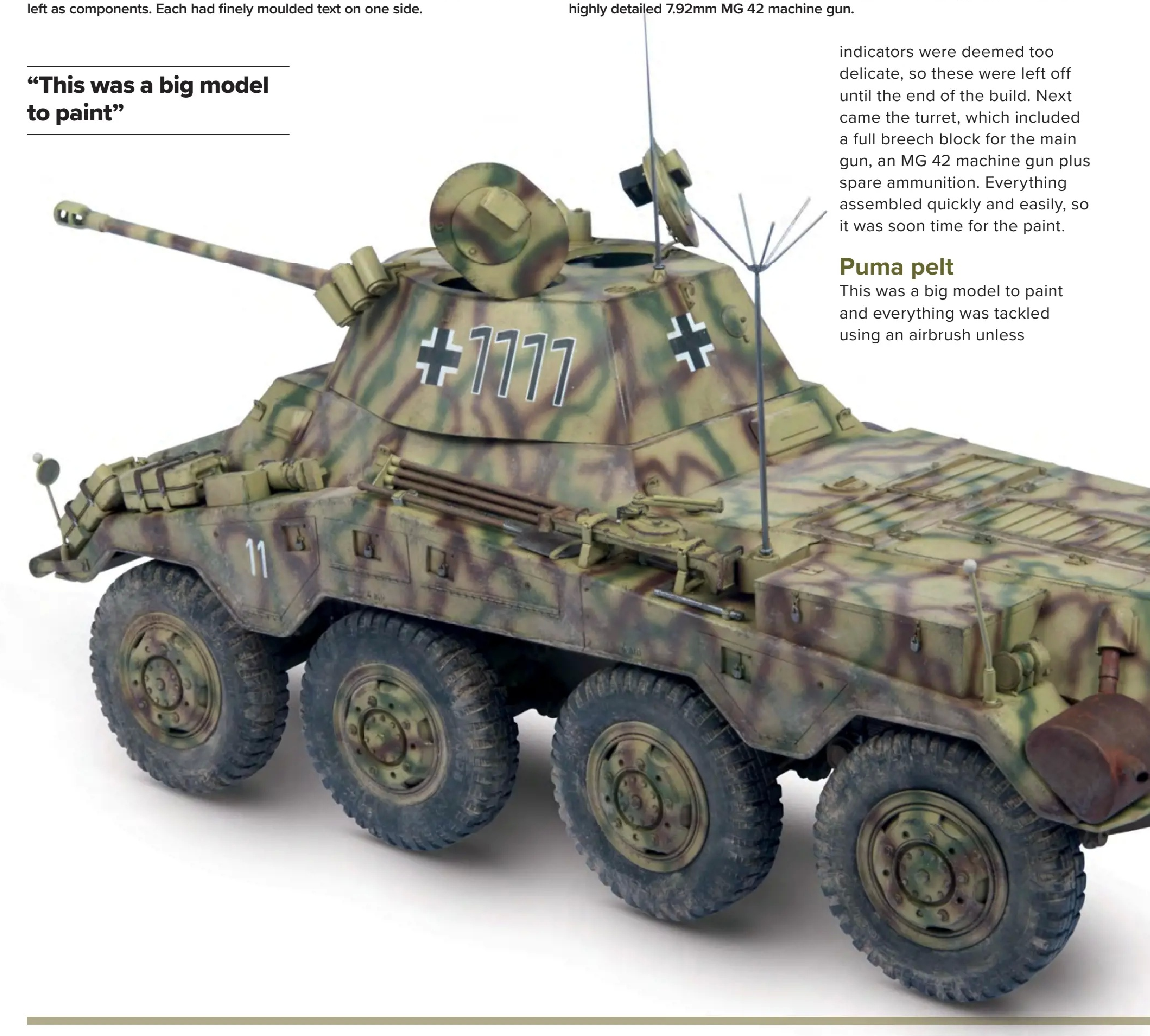
▲ Breech block and sighting mechanism for the 5cm KwK 39, plus parts for the highly detailed 7.92mm MG 42 machine gun.

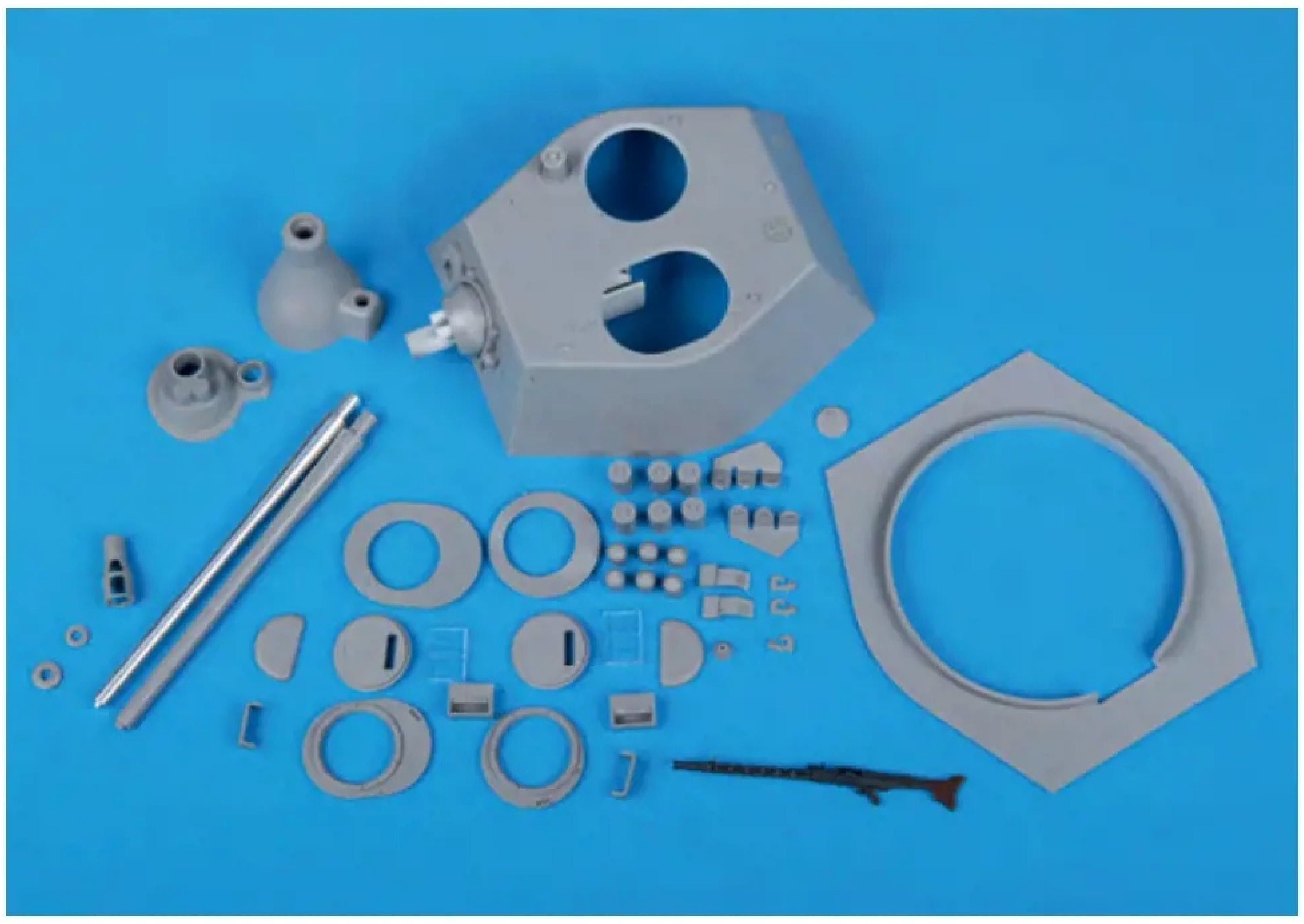
"This was a big model to paint"

indicators were deemed too delicate, so these were left off until the end of the build. Next came the turret, which included a full breech block for the main gun, an MG 42 machine gun plus spare ammunition. Everything assembled quickly and easily, so it was soon time for the paint.

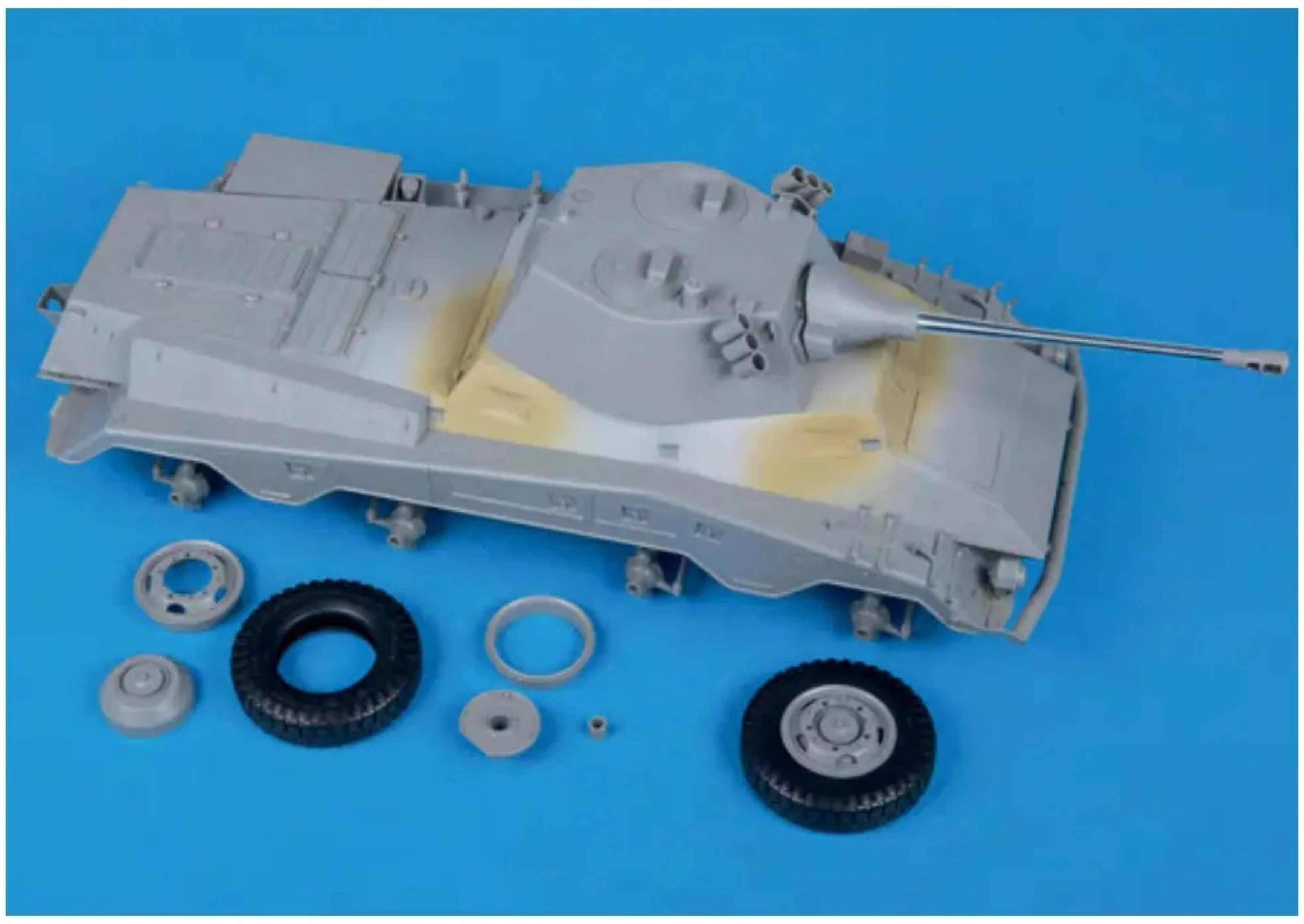
Puma pelt

This was a big model to paint and everything was tackled using an airbrush unless





▲ The turret included smoke dischargers, options for a metal or styrene barrel, plus the hatches and periscopes. The completed MG 42 is also shown.



▲ Everything assembled bar the PE parts, ready for painting. Two of the eight roadwheels are shown, one assembled and one with the parts breakdown.

specified. First was a coat of Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Gray, sprayed direct from the aerosol, in the garden to avoid a fume-filled house. Luckily, the parts fit meant that no remediation was needed prior to the colour coat.

I was using SMS paints for the first time, starting with its version of the ubiquitous late-war Dunkelgelb colour. The paint was labelled as being 'airbrush-ready' and certainly lived up to expectation, plus it sprayed beautifully, providing a tough and even distribution. World War Two German military vehicles were usually camouflaged based on the availability and quality of paints, along with the skills of the crew. My chosen scheme suggested the crew not only had good materials, but were also enthusiastic with the scheme. Next was the Olivgrün shade, also from SMS, and I swapped to using a finer airbrush for this colour as a greater level of control over the paint flow and line width was needed. Attention was paid to the diagrams, but following every wiggle would have been overly challenging, so the majority of the lines were applied randomly.

There was no SMS equivalent of Rotbraun available, so Mr. Color 41 was used instead, diluted equally with Mr. Leveling Thinner, being applied over the Olivgrün, with the only two references followed being the outlines for the two numeric identifiers on the side fenders. This completed the basic scheme, so two gloss coats were hand-painted where decals were to be applied. Das Werk's markings had a matt finish and I wasn't convinced that I could avoid silvering (tiny air bubbles trapped under the clear carrier film) even with all the gloss coat in the world. I've also seen issues where a matt coat can emphasise silvering that's hardly visible beforehand. My approach was therefore to cut all of the numbers from the surrounding carrier film. This took a little time, but was worth the effort. ▶

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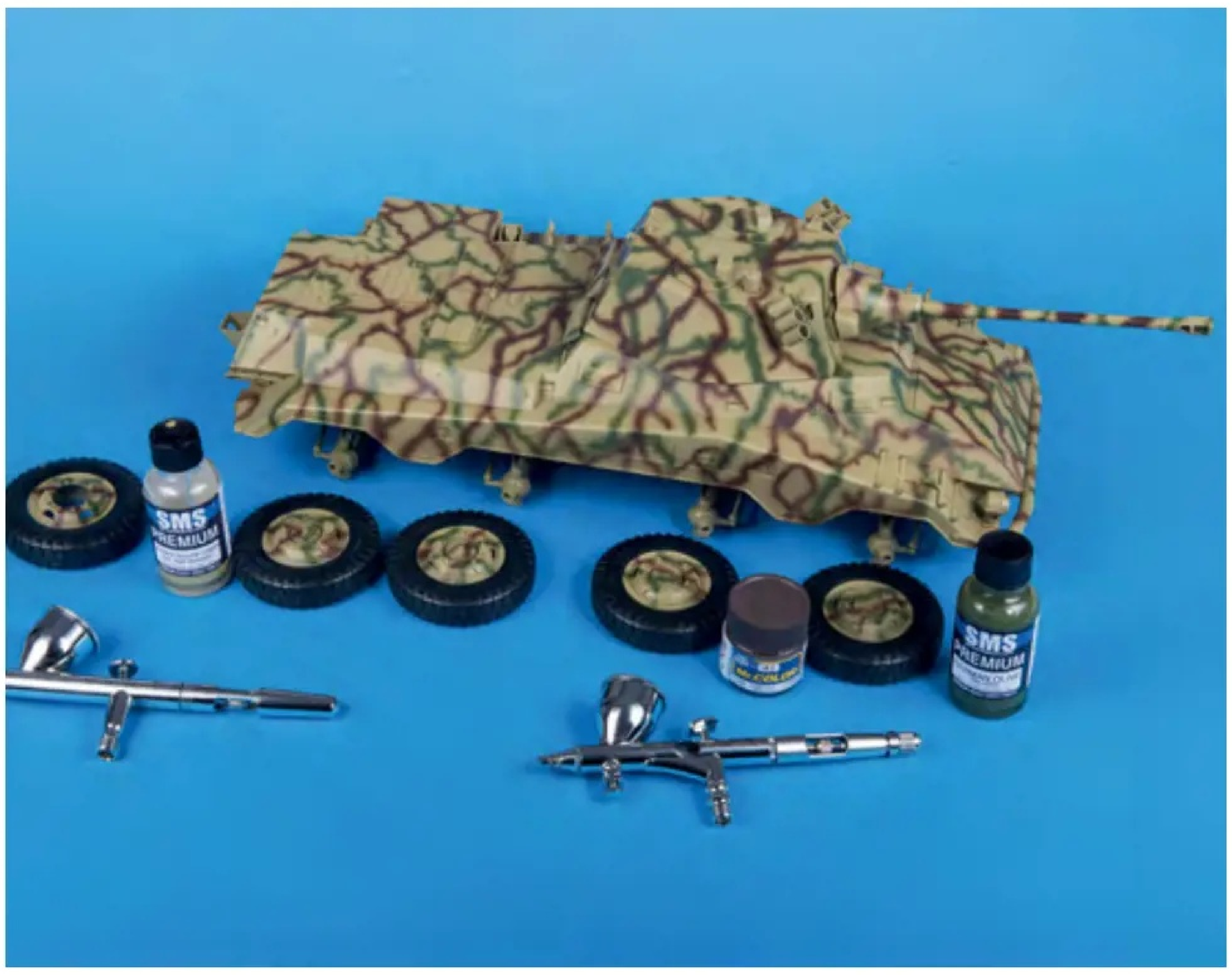
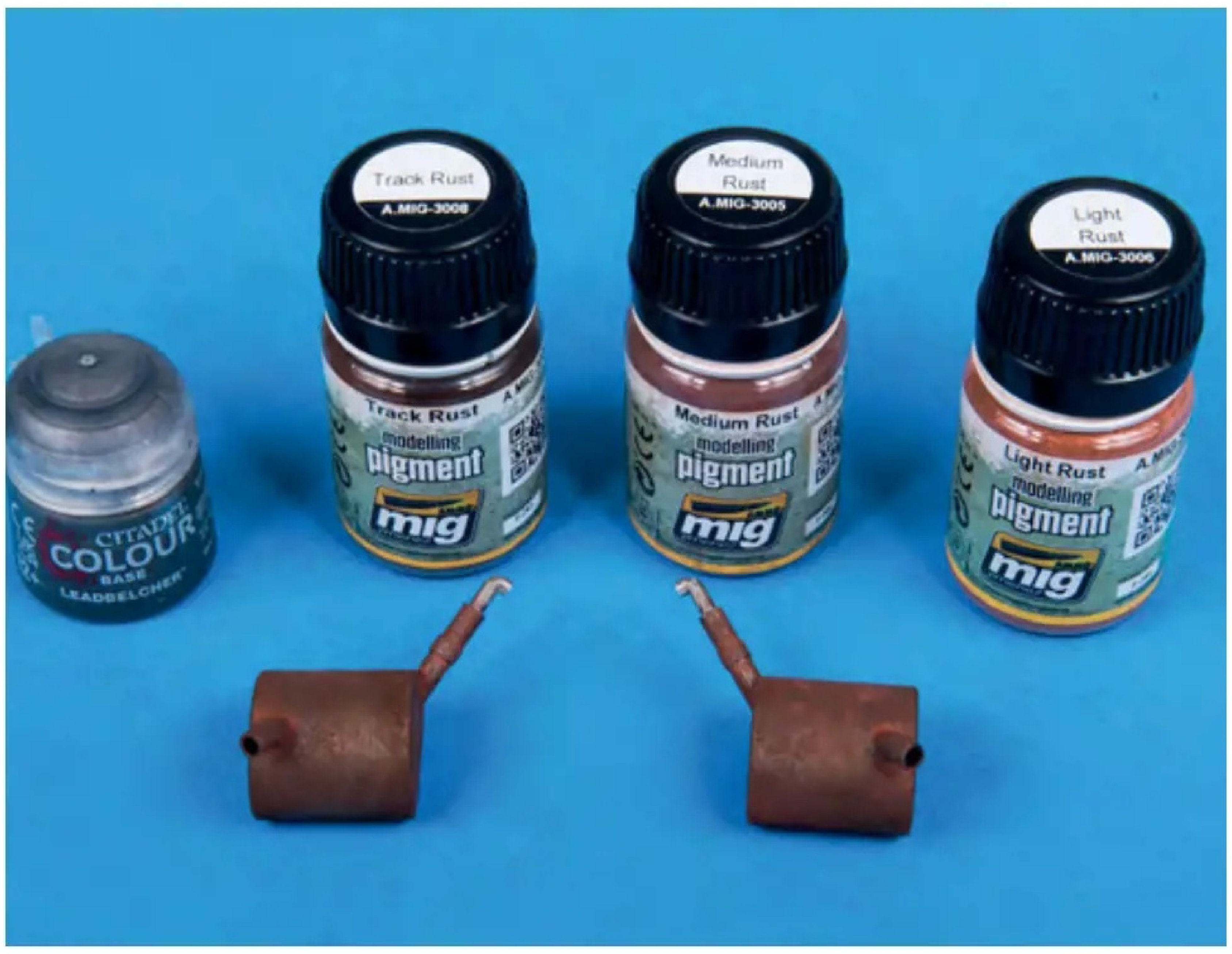


▲ One basic scheme completed. From the left, Dunkelgelb was applied with an Iwata Eclipse, then on the right, Olivgrün (followed by Rotbraun) was sprayed via an Iwata CM-C Plus Custom Micron.

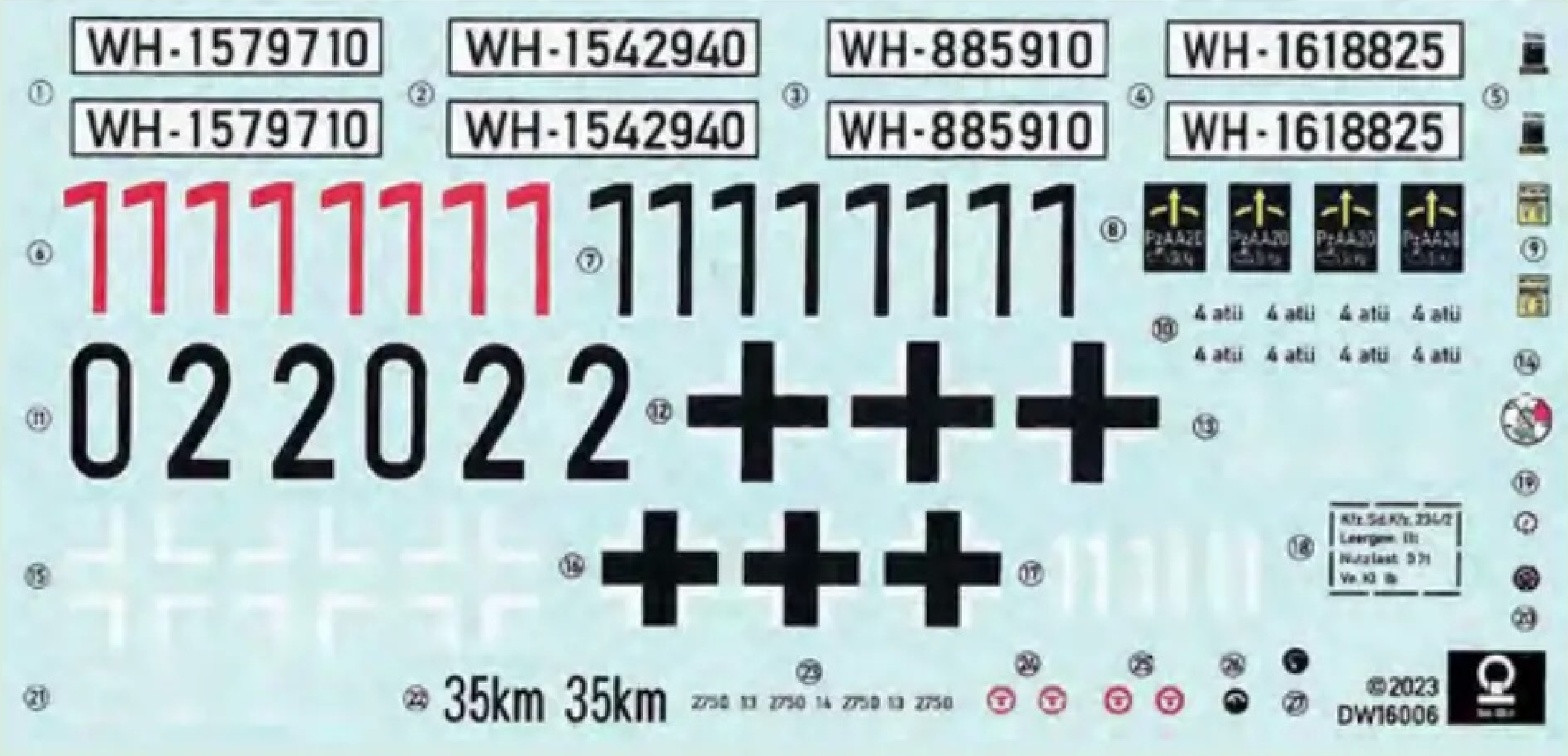


▲ Each exhaust chamber was base-coated with 'Leadbelcher', then a liberal dose of Track Rust, mixed with Pigment Fixer stippled on top, after which random areas of either medium or light rust were painted/stippled.

FELINE LIVERIES

Das Werk provides four markings options for its Puma:

- Panzer-Aufklärungs-Lehr-Abteilung 130, Panzer-Lehr-Division, Germany 1944
- Red 1111, 1./Panzer-Aufklärungs-Abteilung 2, 2. Panzer-Division, Western Front, Normandy, France, summer 1944
- Black 022, Panzer-Aufklärungs-Abteilung 20, 20. Panzer-Division, Neisse, Silesia, Eastern Front, March 1945
- Panzeraufklärungs-Abteilung 7, 7. Panzer-Division, Western Pomerania, Gotenhafen/Danzig, March 1945

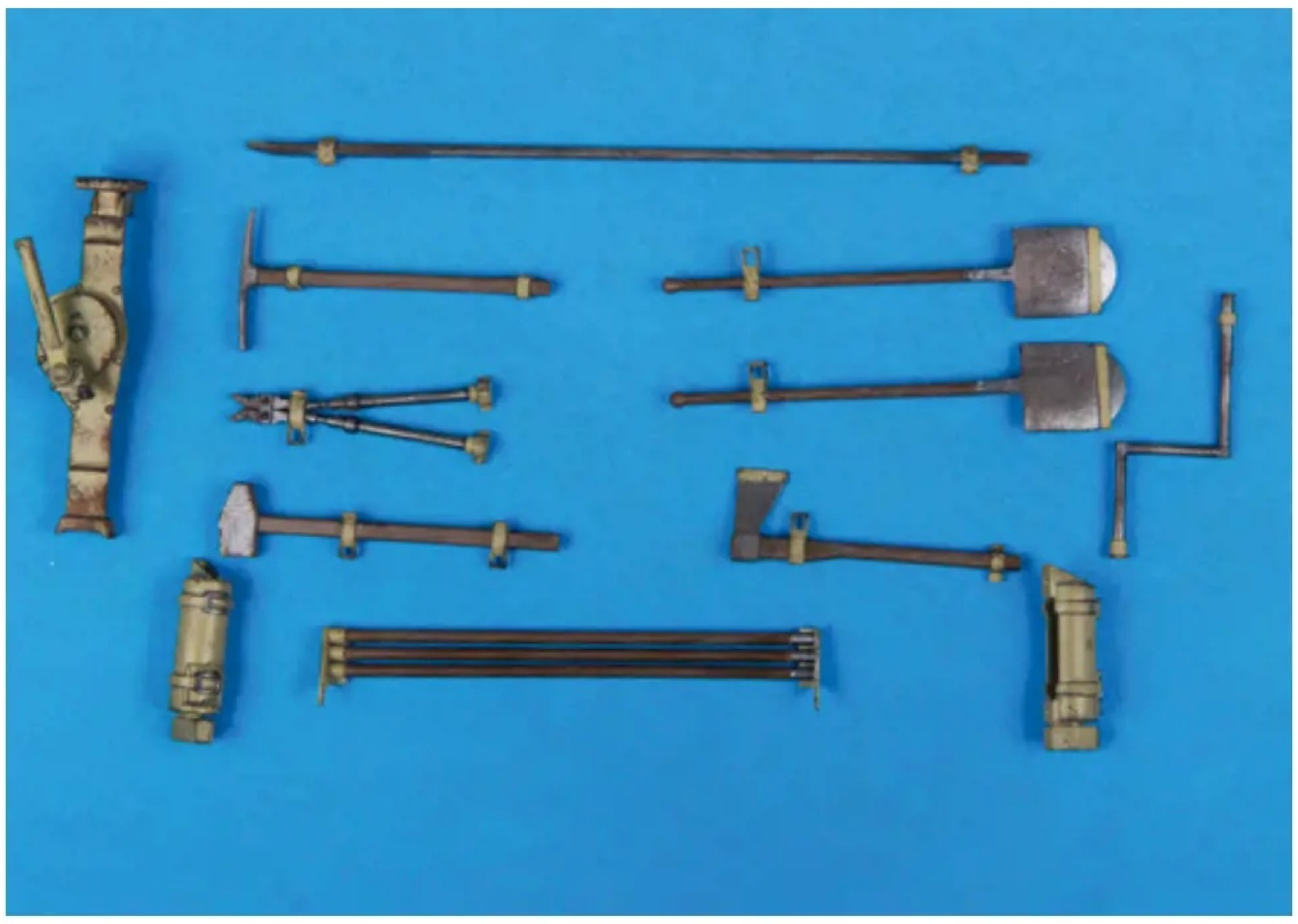


I chose vehicle with the turret number Black 1111, and Das Werk offers two options for the Balkenkreuze and numerals; I found a reference photo of this vehicle and selected the black crosses and numerals. Decaling didn't take particularly long, so next came a coat of VMS Matt to mute the gloss sheen and it was time for weathering.

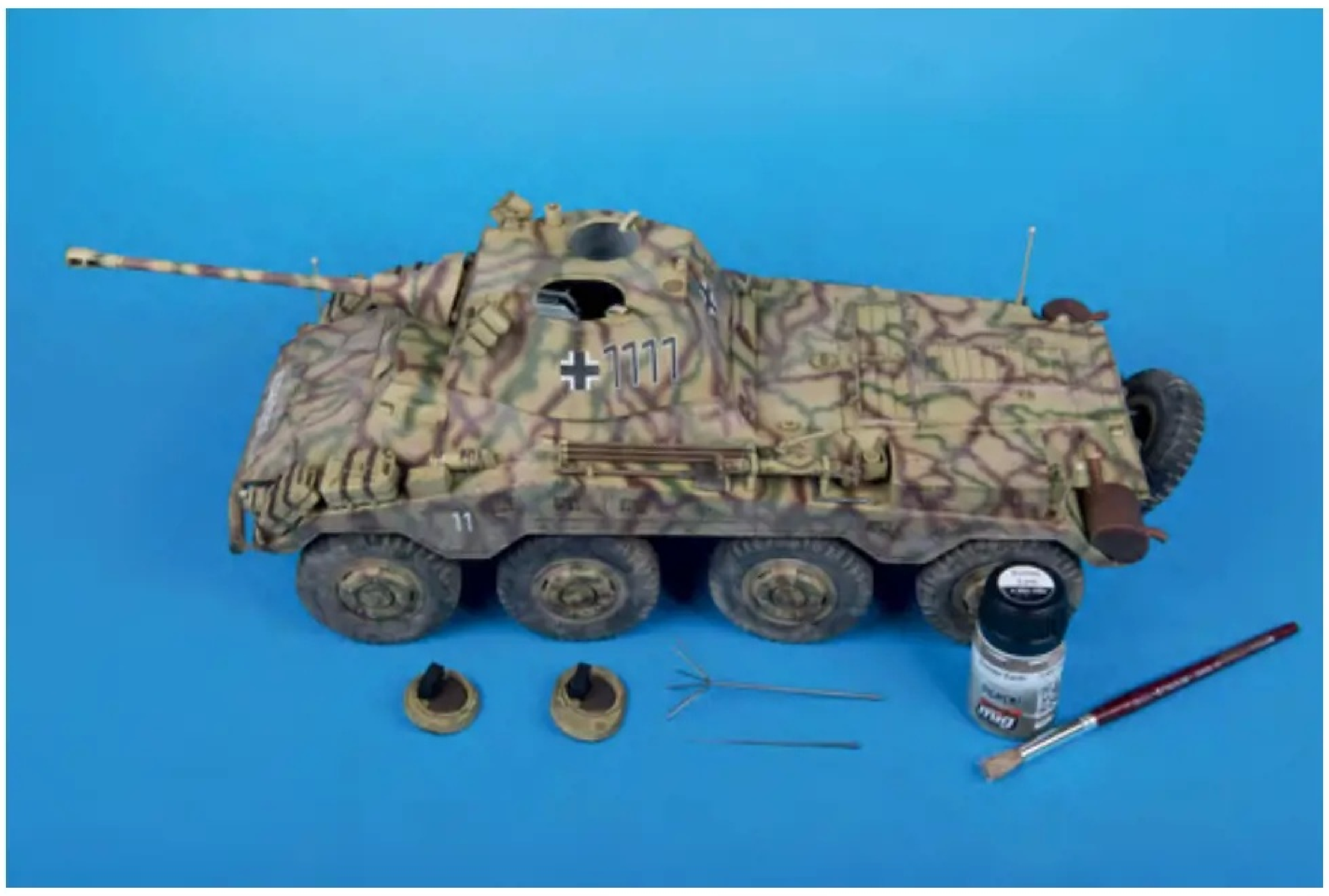
Mucky cat

First were the two exhaust chambers; rust effects were added via a basecoat of Citadel's Leadbelcher, followed by various pigments. Next came the pioneer tools, fire extinguishers and vehicle jack. They were painted with acrylics and then weathered in the same way as the exhausts – a quick nip to the garden shed to inspect my spade gave a suitable reference for weathered steel. The tools were then attached and a dark oil wash was run into the vehicle's detail. Next were scratches and other 'dings', which were applied using a black pencil.

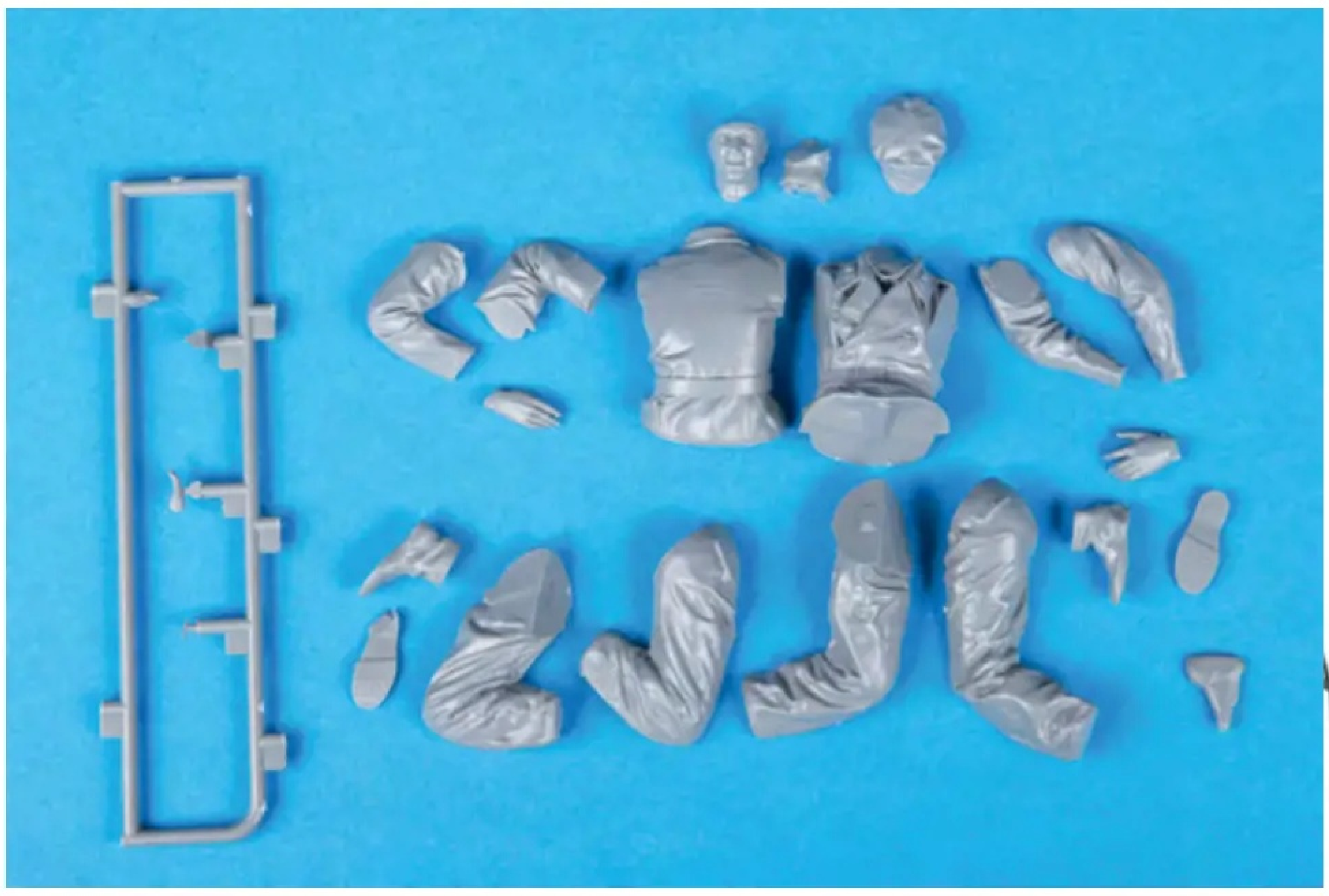
An online reference photo used for this project revealed a dusty, muddy vehicle, so out came the European Earth pigment plus



▲ All the pioneer tools plus the jack were weathered individually by stippling black/rust-coloured pigments with a small amount of pigment fixer.



▲ Almost there! Just the aerials and hatches to attach. European Earth pigment was stippled using a stiff brush to provide a suitably mucky finish, which matched period photos.



▲ A 'bonus' commander figure was included, as seen here. The parts on the runner were a thumb plus a cigarette, left attached to avoid them being lost. Imagine four people cramming into the vehicle!

▲ Here he is completed. Mixes of oils over an acrylic base for the face and hands and acrylics for everything else. The sculpting on the face wasn't up to resin standards, but acceptable.

fixer and an extended session then ensued, dirtying the vehicle from top and bottom. Pigments were stippled then moved around both with a brush and fingers, until the finish looked acceptable. The wheels were weathered separately, both for ease of handling and also because they were heavy, so moving the model around to weather the nooks and crannies would have been difficult. Final items were the turret hatches and a pair of aerials, after which one complete big cat sat on the modelling mat.

Pretty Puma?

I'd say that the complexities of the suspension system place Das Werk's 1/16 Sd.Kfz.234/2 Puma in the 'suitable for intermediate-level modellers' category. It is undoubtedly superbly engineered and the end result is a decidely chunky, imposing World War Two vehicle. There were several small anomalies with the instructions, but nothing that can't be easily rectified; parts breakdown and the spare pioneer tools suggests that if the 234/2 version sells well, then hopefully we may see the 243/3 and 234/4 variants issued in the future. AMW

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

AMMO (www.migjimenez.com)
A.MIG.3001 Black
A.MIG-3004 Europe Earth
A.MIG.7400 Pigment Rust Set

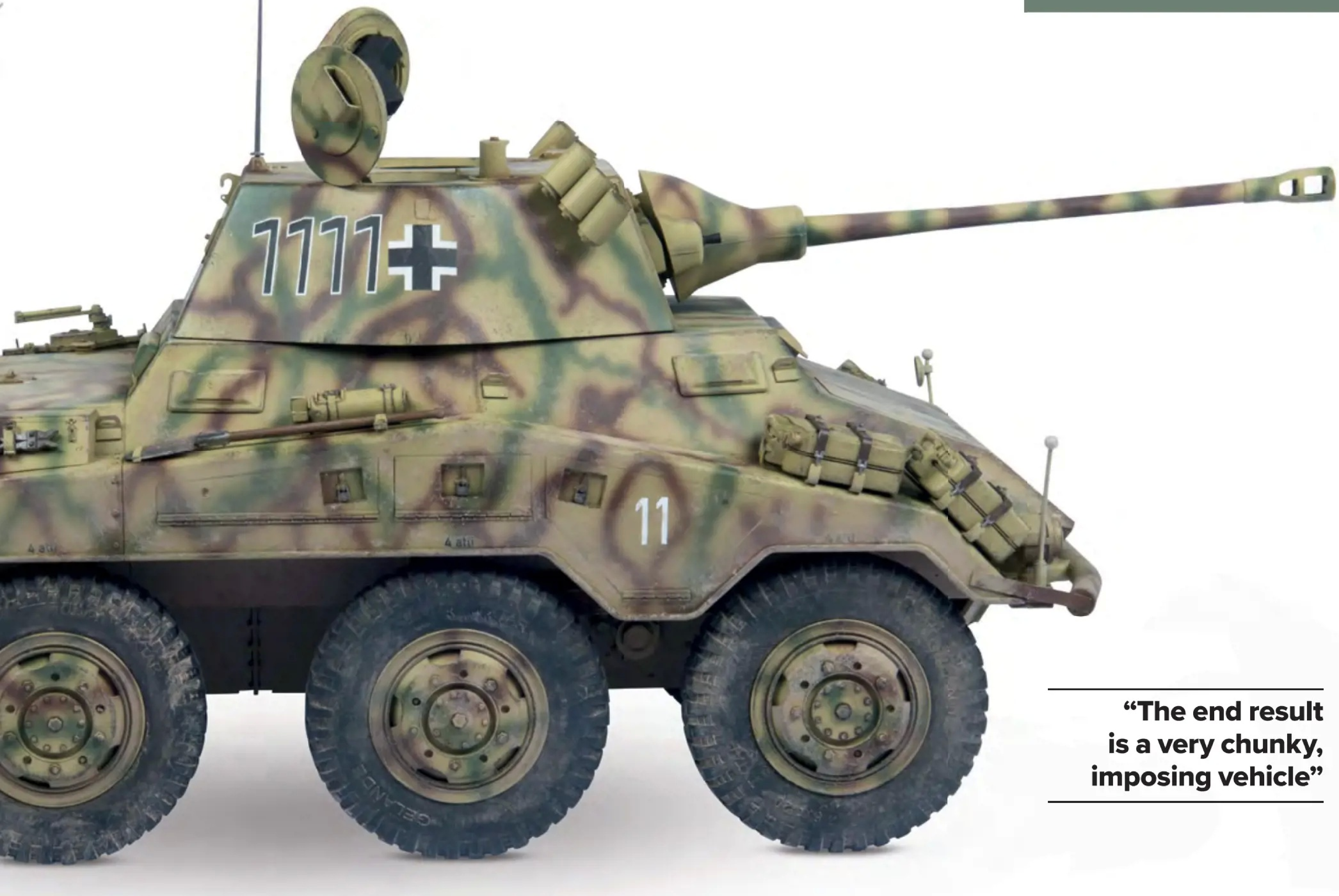
Citadel Colours (www.citadelcolour.com)
Leadbelcher

Mr. Hobby/Color (www.albionhobbies.com)
Mr. Finishing Surfacer 1500 Gray
C41 Rotbraun

SMS (www.albionhobbies.com)
PL129 German Yellow Green (RAL 7028) variant
PL128 German Olive RAL 6003

VMS (www.albionhobbies.com)
HD Matt

Vallejo (www.creativemodels.co.uk)
70.344 German Tanker White

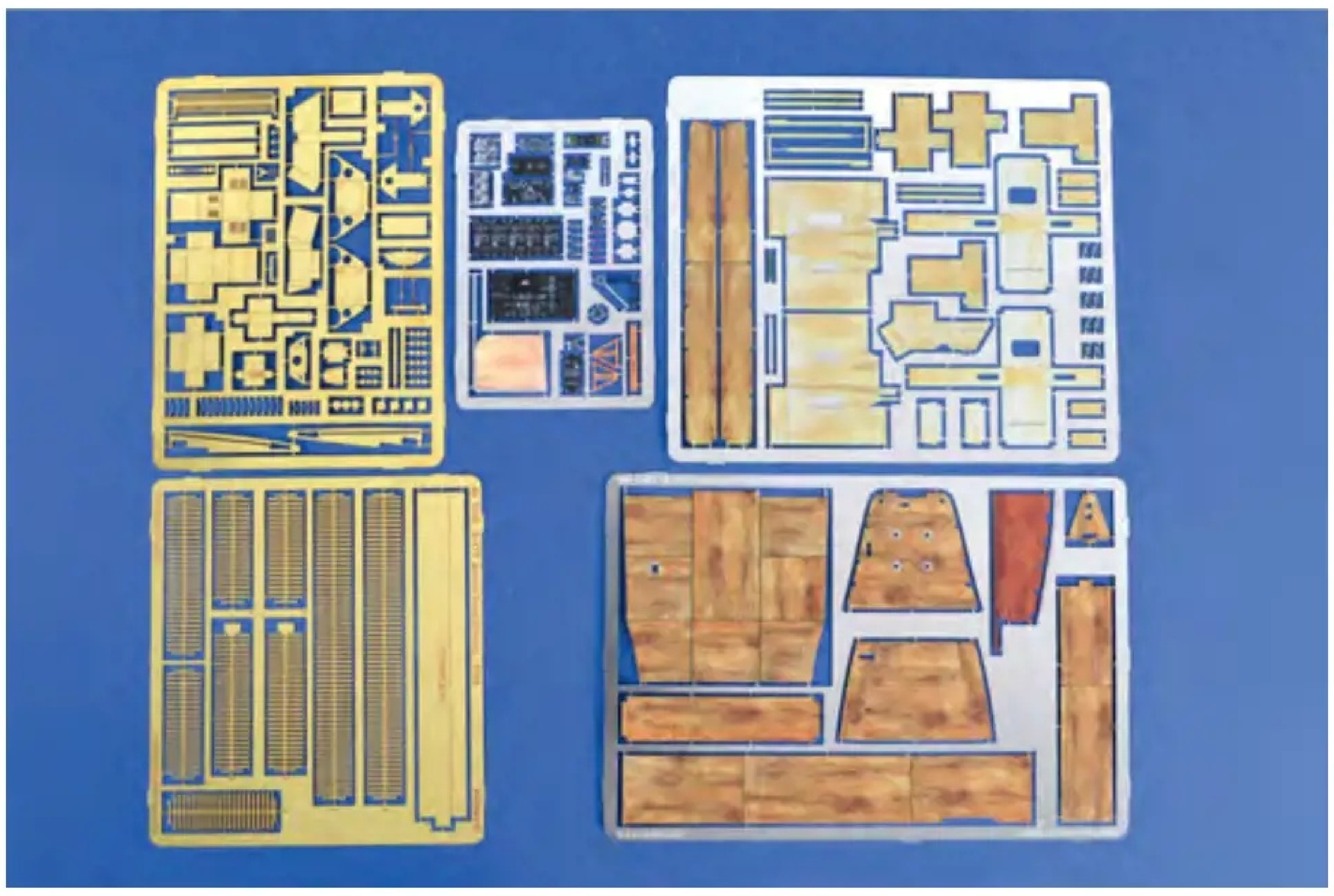


> **"The end result is a very chunky, imposing vehicle"**

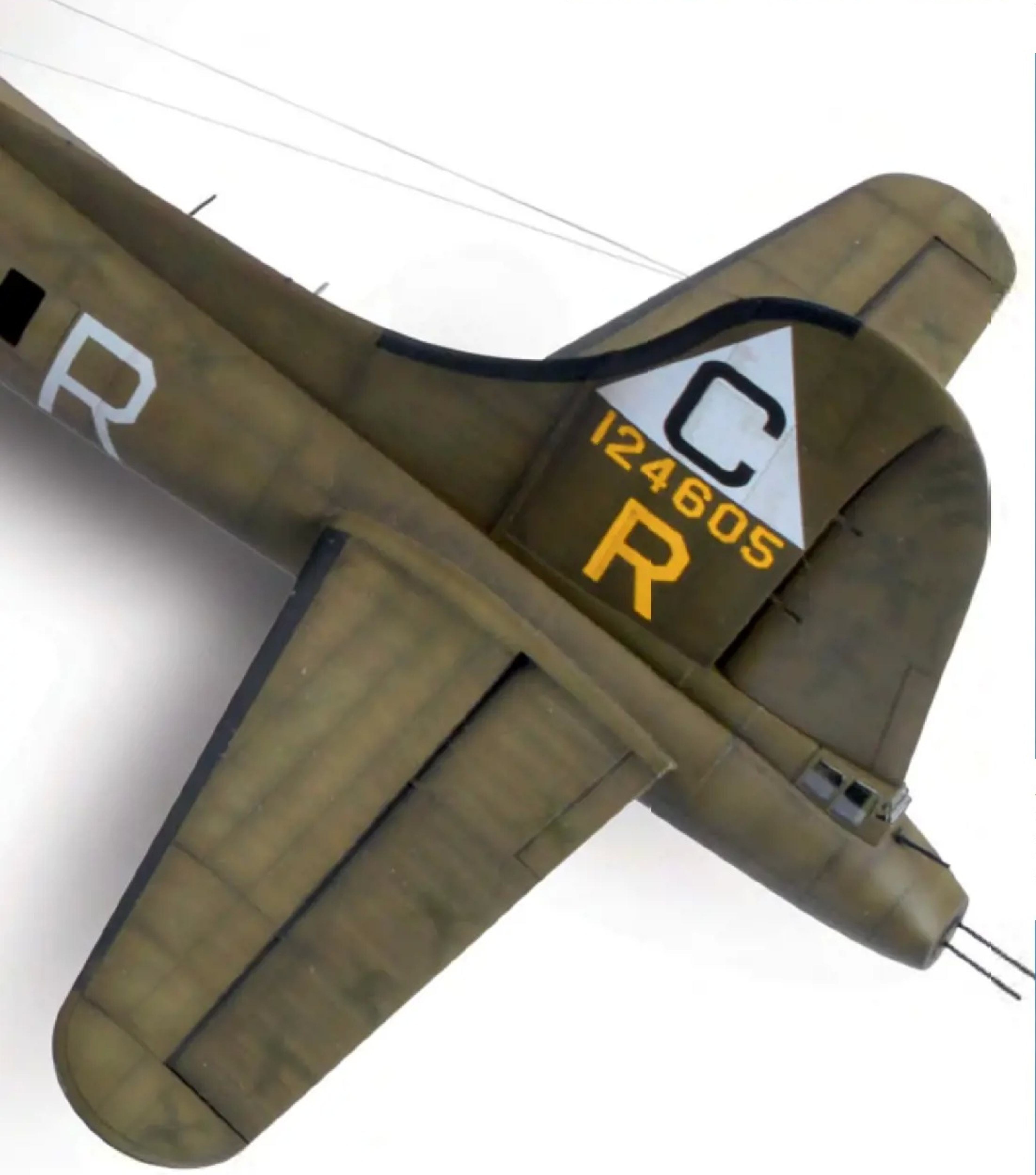
Jay Blakemore clears space on his work bench to make room for Eduard's mighty B-17 Flying Fortress limited-edition release

HELL'S ANGEL

Occasionally a proposition comes along that gives pause, and such was the case when I was asked by a private collector if I would be interested in building Eduard's newly released Bloody Hundredth limited-edition iteration of the HK Models' 1/48 B-17F Flying Fortress. With a wing-span larger than the width of my modelling bench, taking on such a project would mean plenty of work, especially when considering that the collector wanted the build to include as many aftermarket accessories as I could lay my hands on. Having recently read Donald



▶ **A closer look at the contents revealed the comprehensive pre-painted PE frets for the wooden floor sections and ammunition boxes. The latter required considerable bending, but did look the part when finished. Ammunition belts weren't convincing, though, being difficult to shape, so they weren't used. Other 'goodies' included radio detail, table top and legs, plus optional navigational and plotting instruments.**

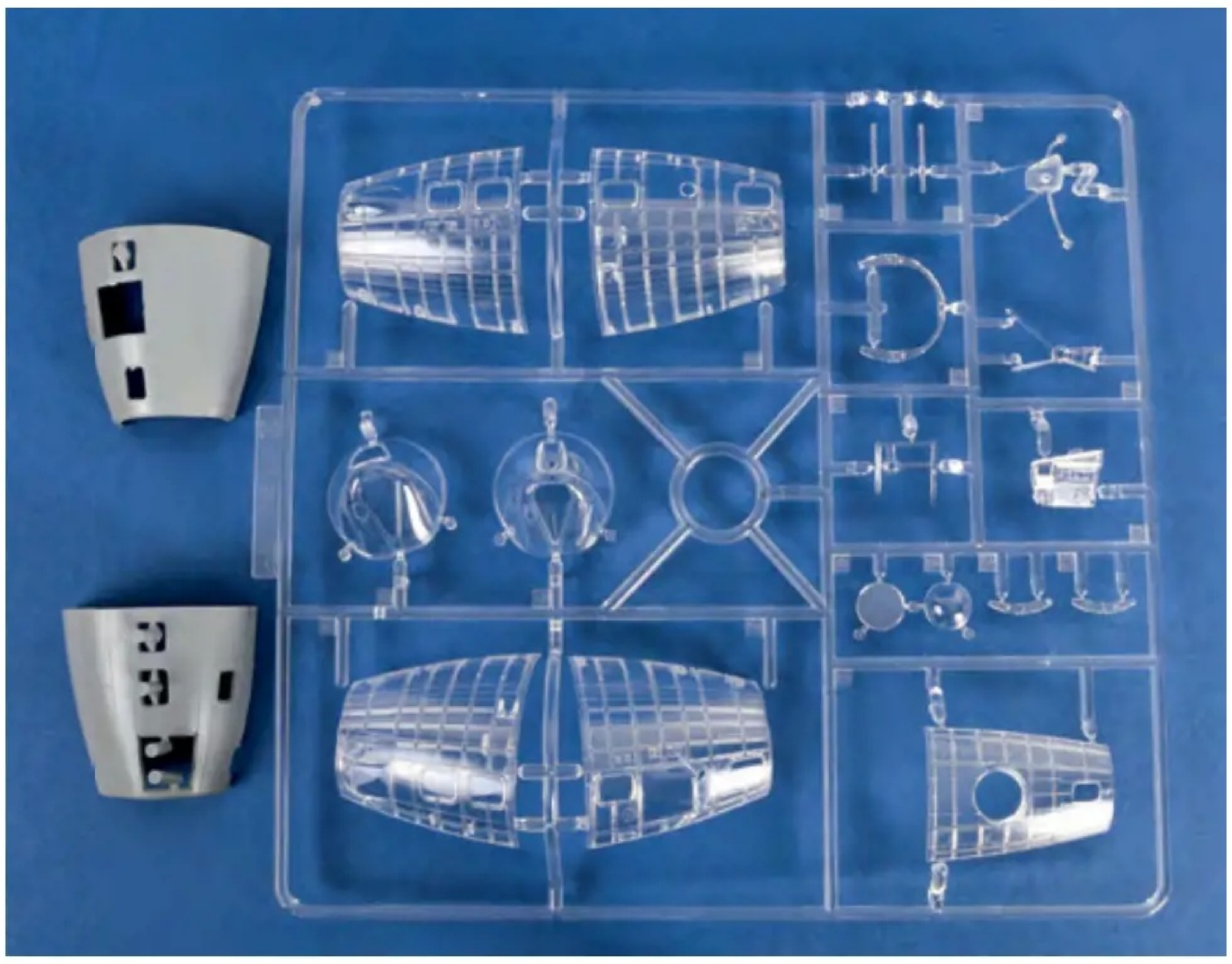


MODEL SPEC

The Bloody Hundredth 1943
By: Eduard
Stock code: 11183
Scale: 1/48
Price: £159.99
Available from: Eduard stockists

eduard
LIMITED
The Bloody Hundredth 1943
1/48

▲ The fuselage halves were bagged individually; the numerous ejector-pin release tags required removal and lengthy clean-up, though the fuselage sections themselves were perfectly formed with no warping.

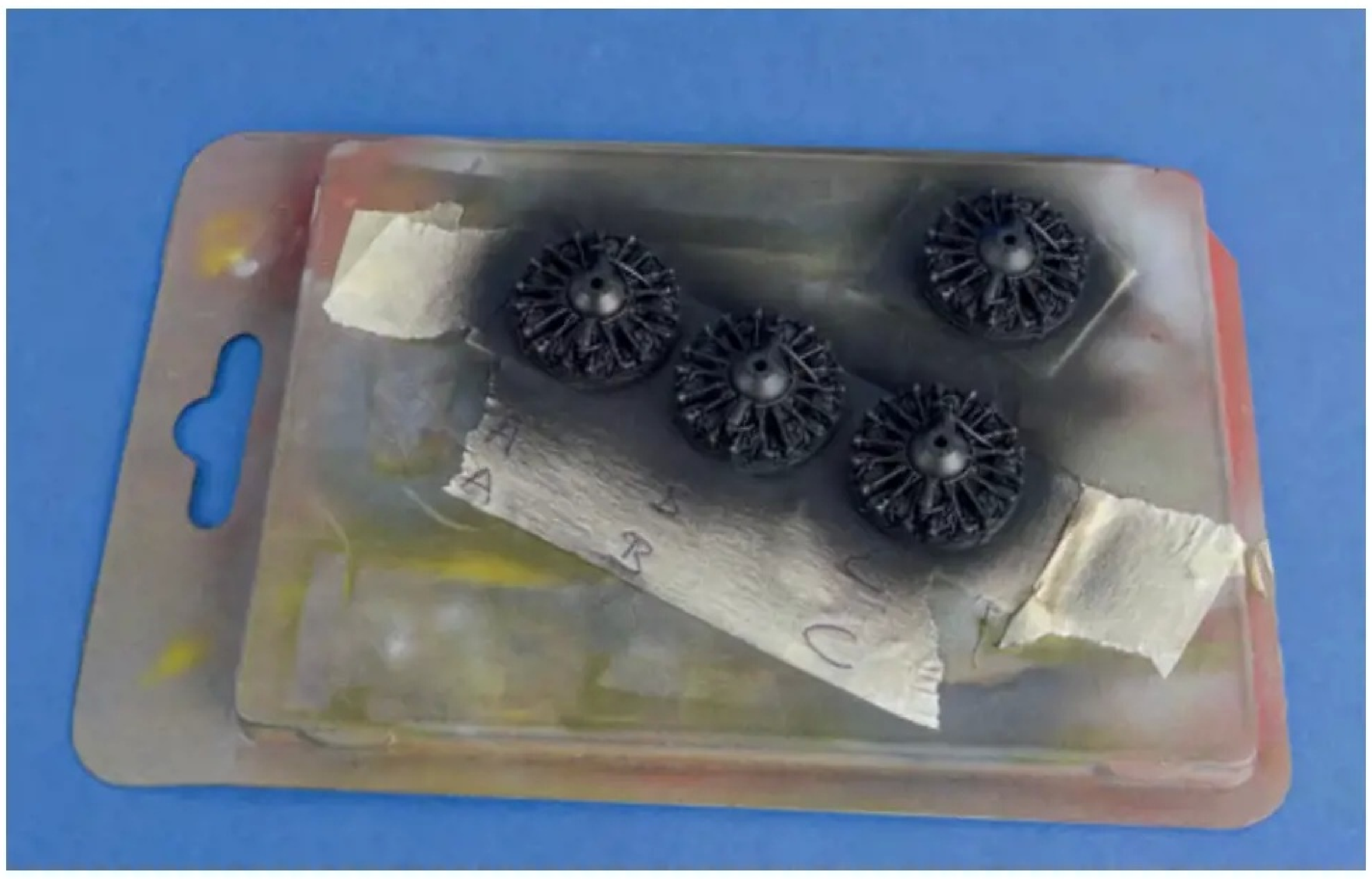


▲ Eduard's additional nose parts were moulded beautifully and exhibited exceptional detail. They would have been a joy to use, negating the need to add individual glazing sections, but weren't employed, due to the customer's choice of an alternative scheme to those provided.

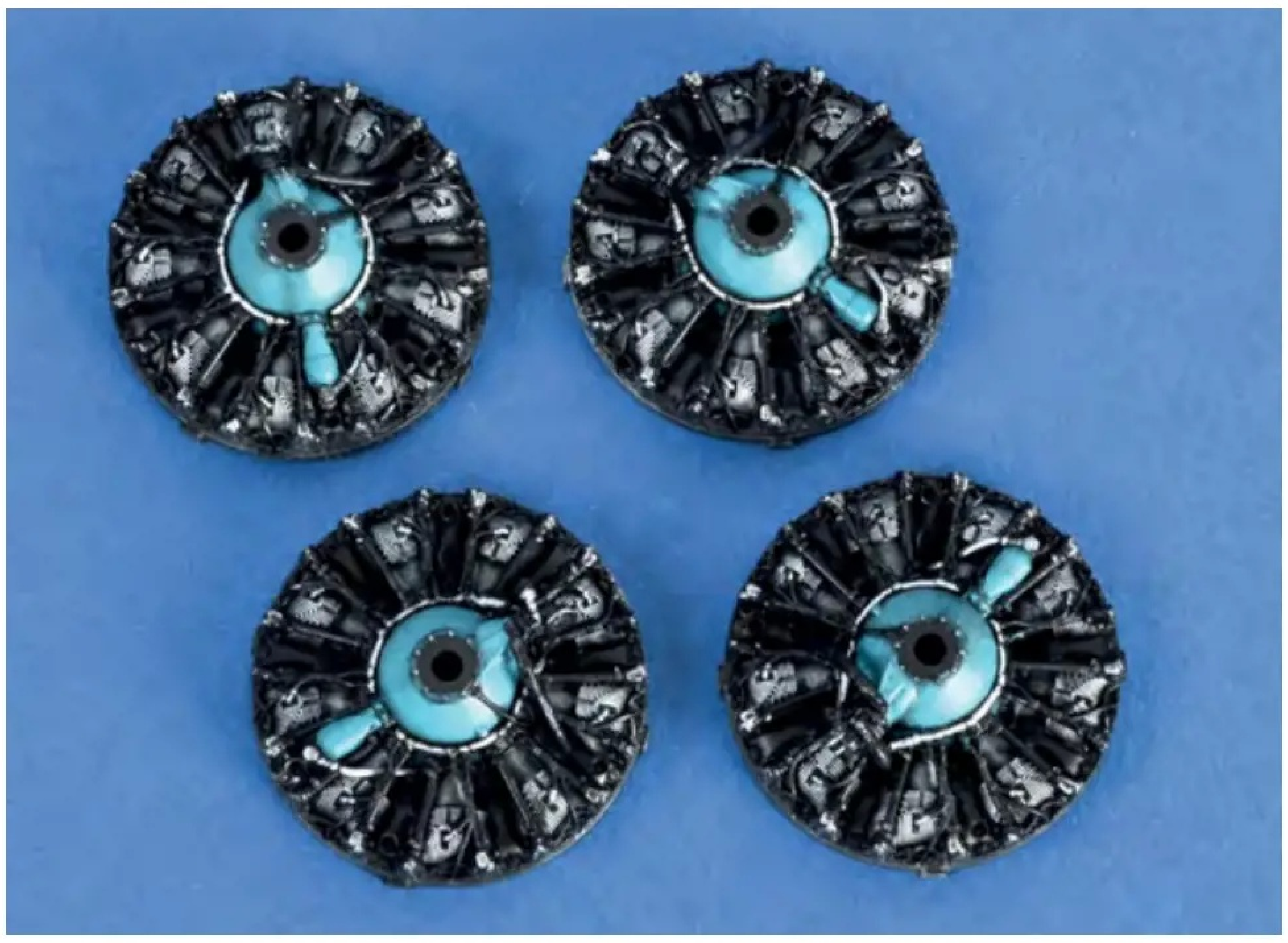
The Bloody Hundredth 1943
INSTRUCTION SHEET
1/48
Bloody Hundredth 1943
RUCTION SHEET
BONUS

▲ The box was stuffed to the brim with styrene and, oddly, two similar instruction books. Each covered different colour schemes, and while the construction appeared similar, subtle differences included nose and glazing configurations. Note, one volume contained an illustrated history of the 'Bloody Hundredth'.

◀ Wing halves came locked together and each pair was bagged separately and devoid of moulding tabs. Once assembled they required very little neatening, other than the seams plus minor gap filling along the leading edges. The gaping leading-edge intakes required blanking with plastic card boxes to prevent views of the interiors.



▲ The engine painting process began with Vallejo's Black Primer. It would have been a quick and simple step to simply dry-brush them with grey and then call it a day, but why do that ...

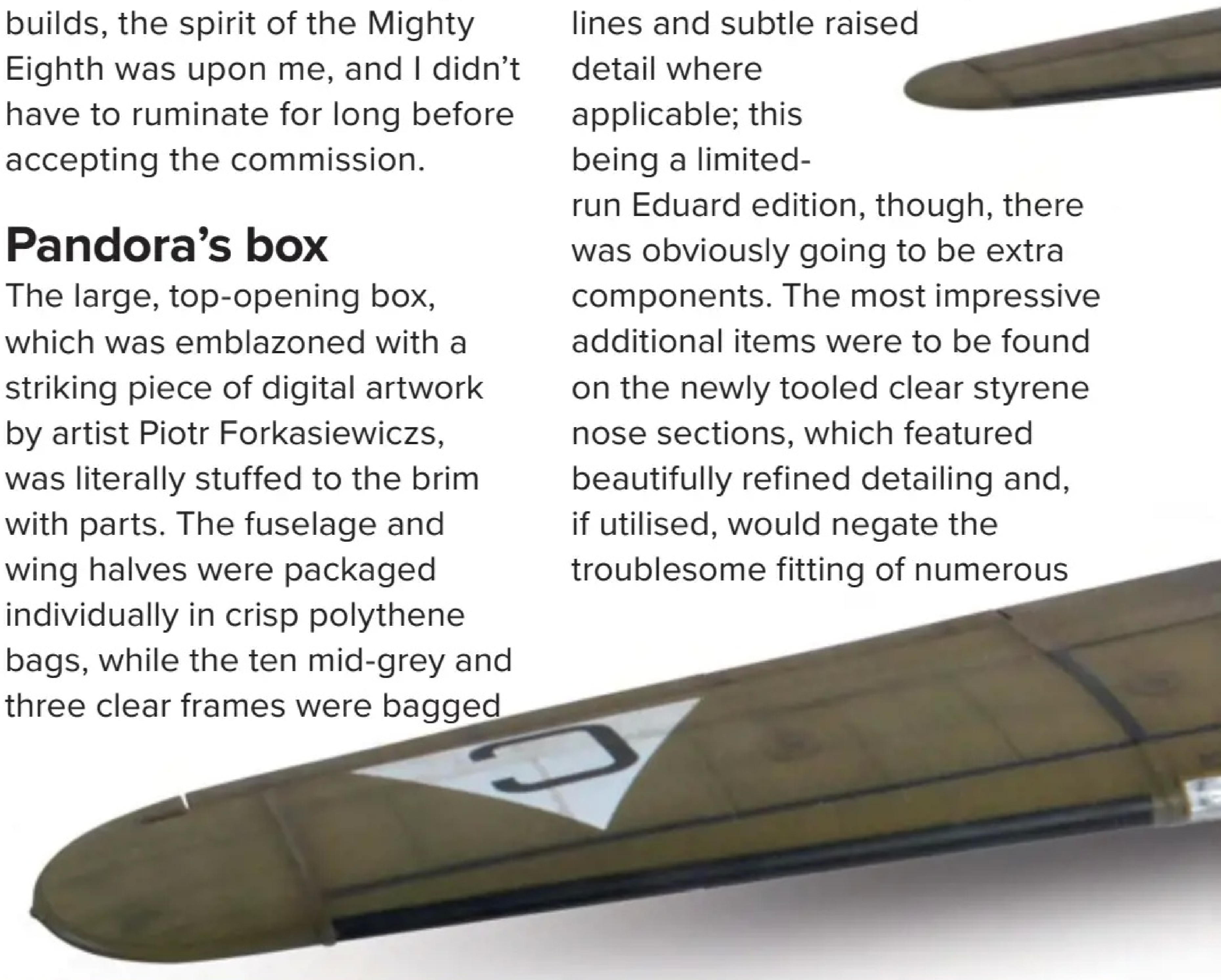


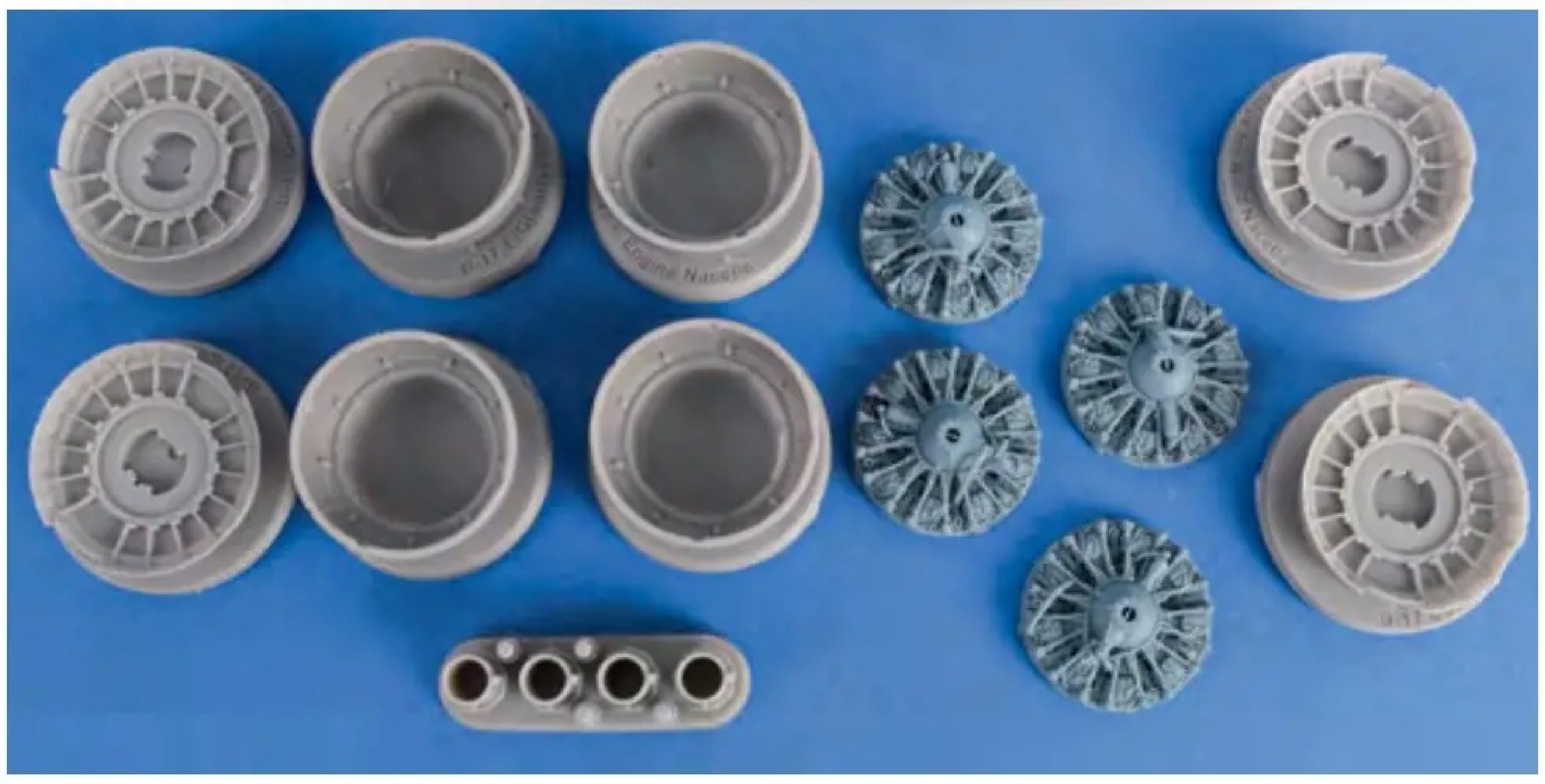
▲ ... when you can add depth and interest by adding layers of colour? Vallejo's Steel was airbrushed over the black-base and allowed to dry overnight. Black enamel (Humbrol 85) was then sprayed on top and, before it had dried fully, was partially washed off the cylinder heads and other small details using a white spirit-dampened brush to reveal steel highlights and leave shading in the recessed areas. Finally, the engine blocks were brush painted with an acrylic blue/grey mix, utilising Vallejo shades.

L Miller's *Masters of the Air* (Simon & Schuster, 2007), and having just immersed myself in several Eduard P-51 Mustang builds, the spirit of the Mighty Eighth was upon me, and I didn't have to ruminate for long before accepting the commission.

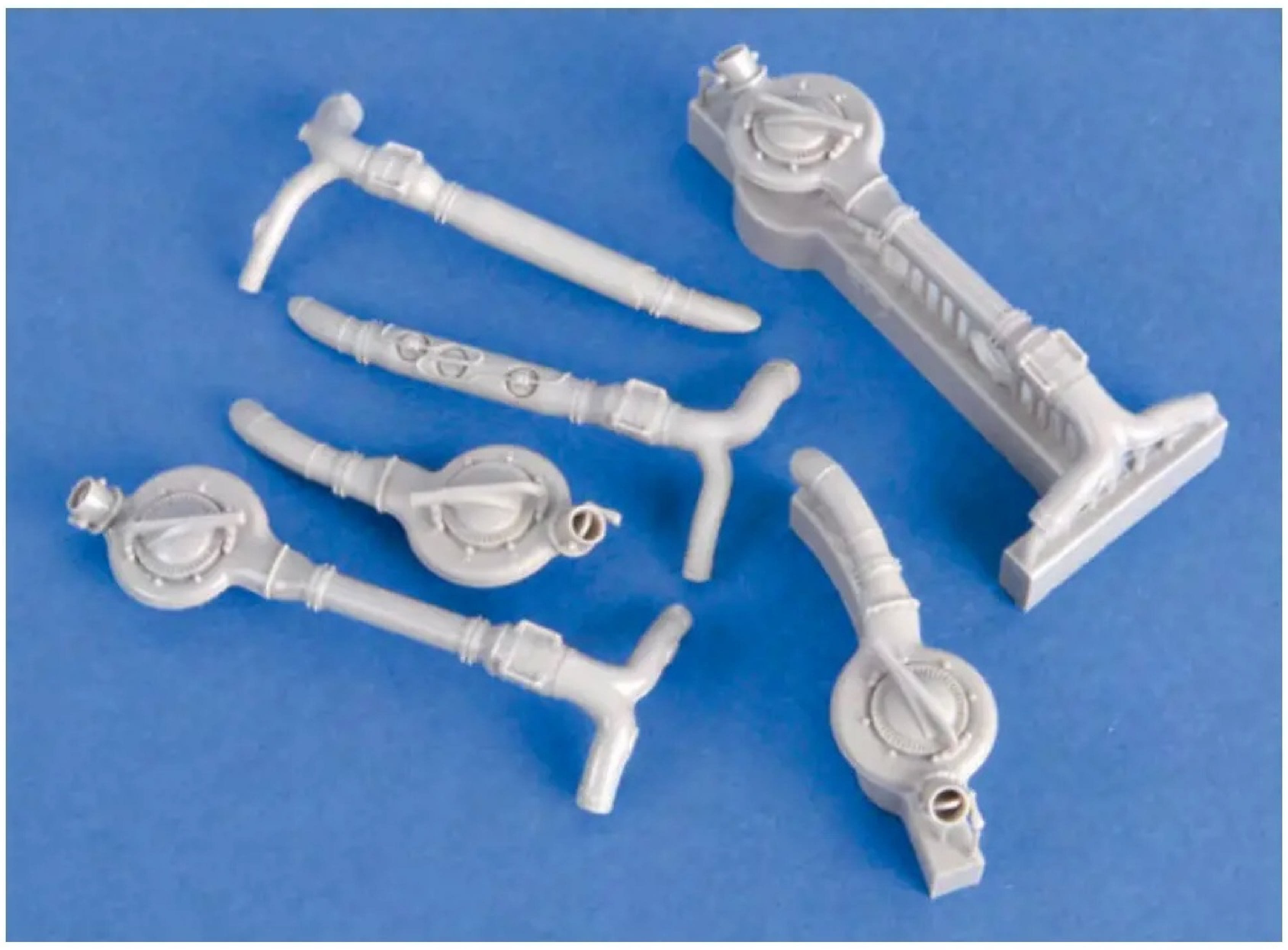
Pandora's box

The large, top-opening box, which was emblazoned with a striking piece of digital artwork by artist Piotr Forkasiewiczs, was literally stuffed to the brim with parts. The fuselage and wing halves were packaged individually in crisp polythene bags, while the ten mid-grey and three clear frames were bagged individually or in pairs. Most items were unchanged from Hong Kong Model's 2019 release and featured finely engraved panel lines and subtle raised detail where applicable; this being a limited-run Eduard edition, though, there was obviously going to be extra components. The most impressive additional items were to be found on the newly tooled clear styrene nose sections, which featured beautifully refined detailing and, if utilised, would negate the troublesome fitting of numerous

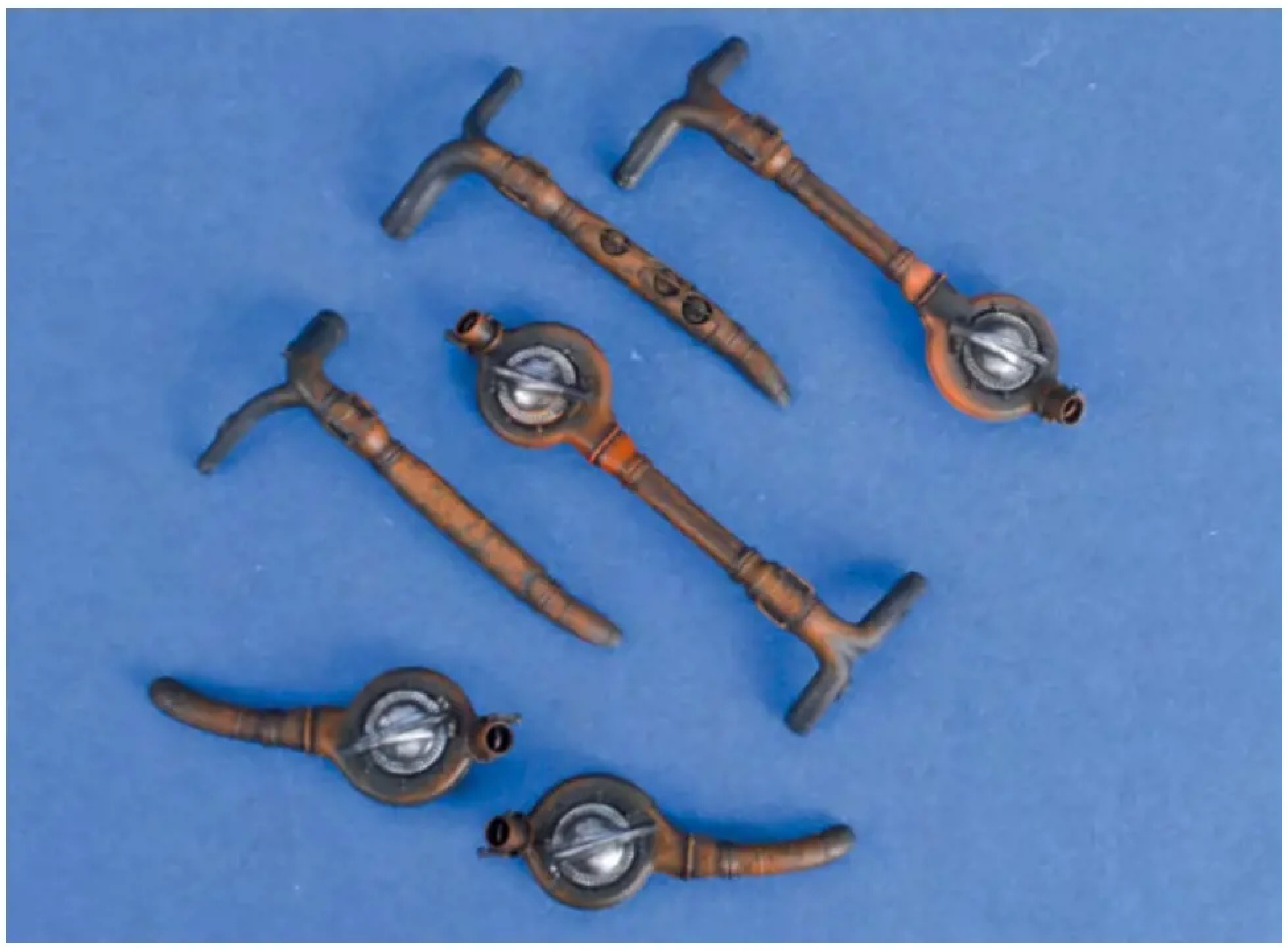




▲ The impressive and comprehensive resin engine set from Hungarian firm SBS Model. Cowling sections were attached to substantial casting blocks and – given the delicate nature of the cooling flaps in particular – there was a high risk of damage. However, drilling and sawing the blocks proved easier than anticipated and just a single flap was cracked.

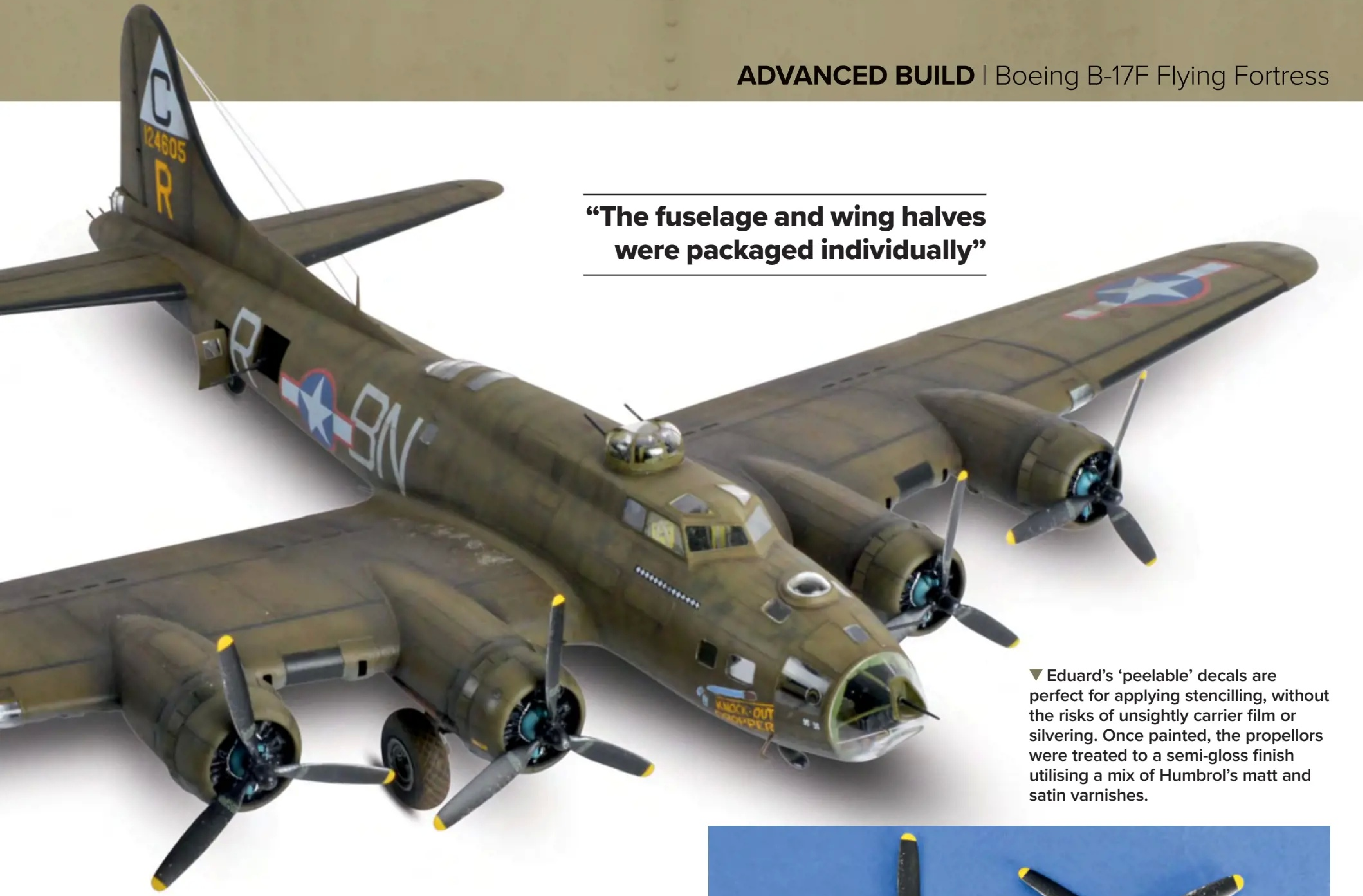


▲ Eduard always provides interesting additions to its limited-edition releases, and the B-17 was no exception, containing as it did these stunning, single-piece resin exhausts. Each part came attached to a casting block, though the thin attachment points were removed and neatened easily.



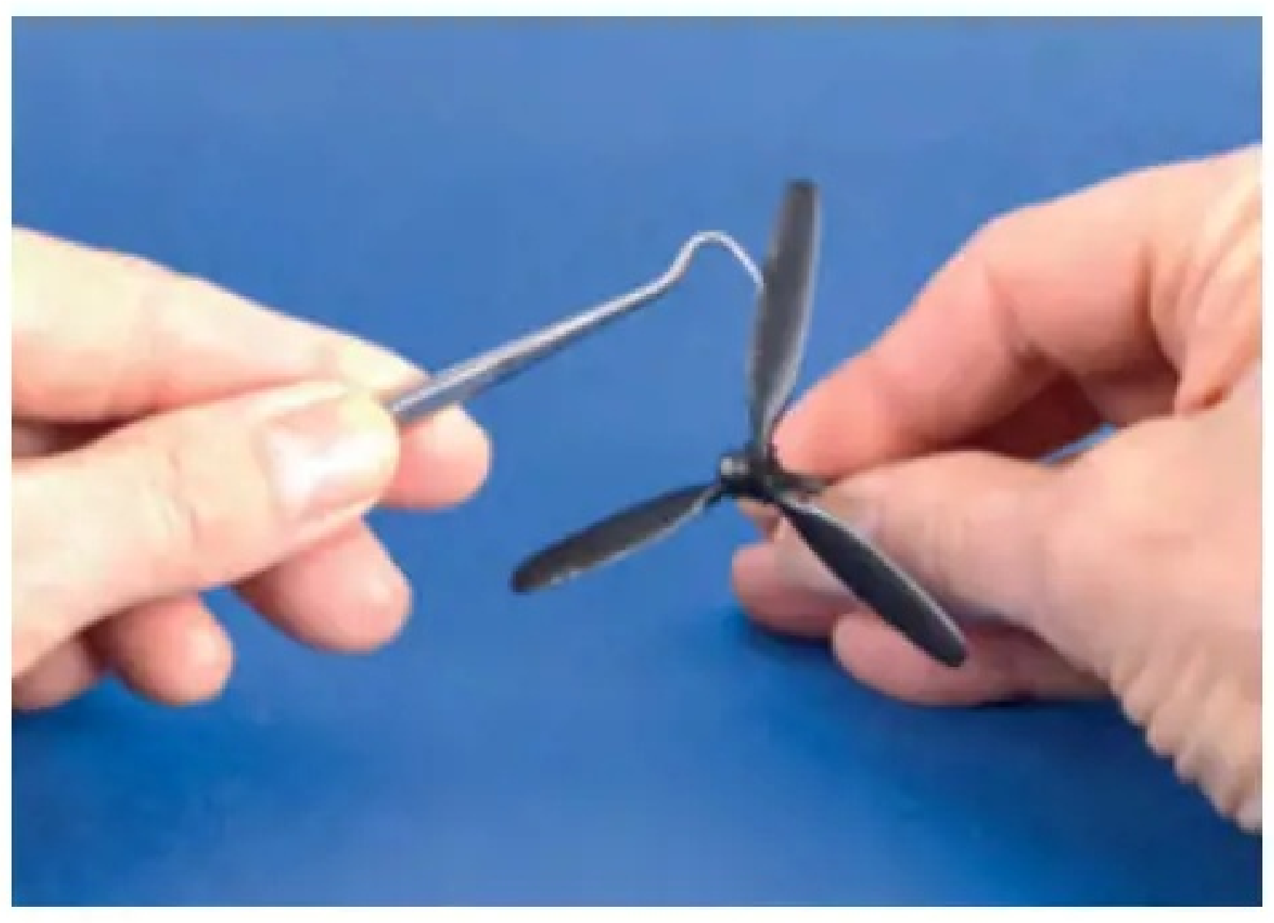
▲ The resin exhausts deserved nothing more than an eye-catching finish, and colour photographs of the real items provided plenty of inspiration. A similar process was used to that of the engines; utilising a Vallejo acrylic base and metal coat; here Humbrol's Coal Black, Brown and Orange were combined to add rust effects.

> **"The fuselage and wing halves were packaged individually"**

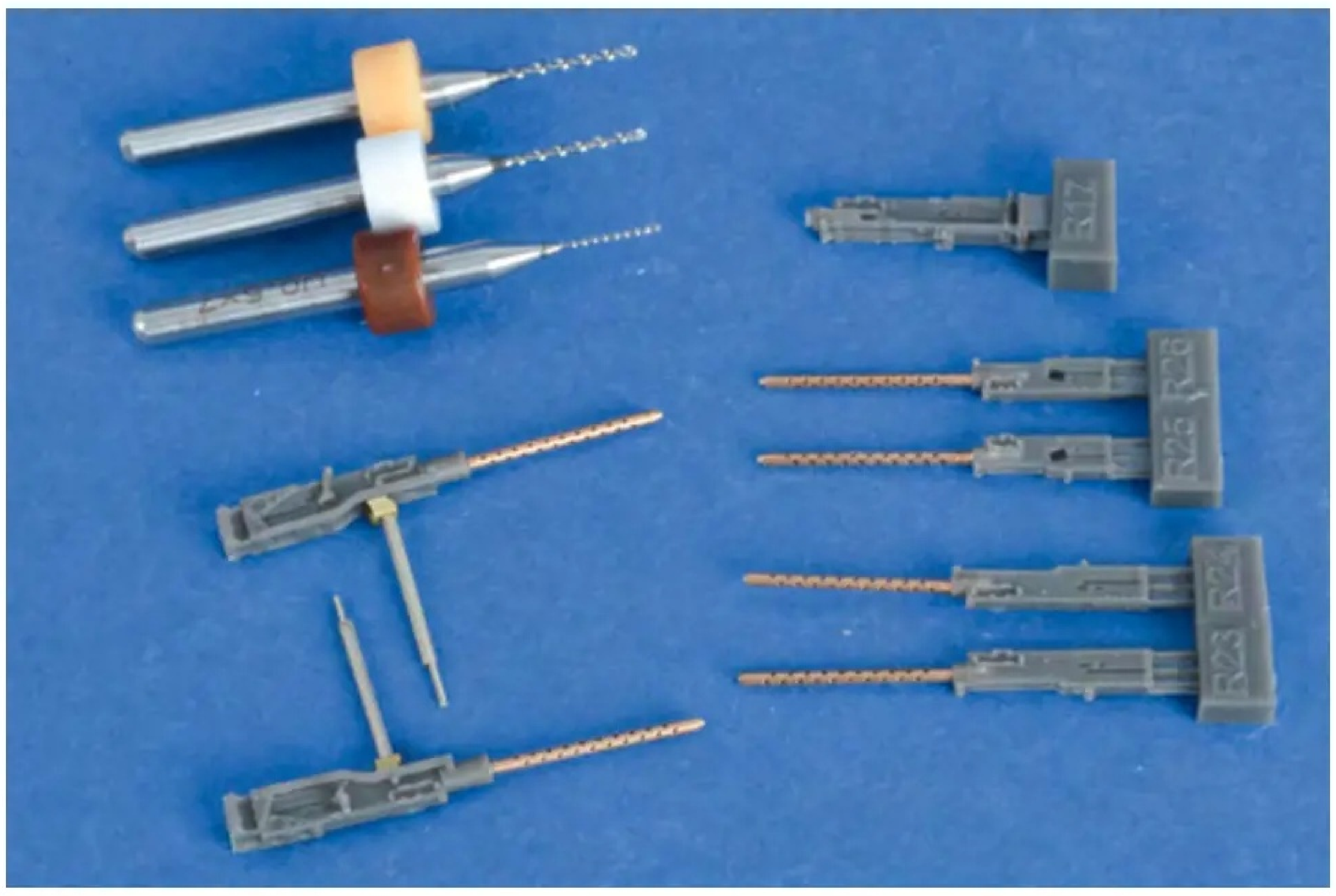


▼ Eduard's 'peelable' decals are perfect for applying stencilling, without the risks of unsightly carrier film or silvering. Once painted, the propellors were treated to a semi-gloss finish utilising a mix of Humbrol's matt and satin varnishes.

individual glazing parts as in the original kit. Resin upgrades included a set of wonderfully detailed exhausts, while a pre-coloured photo-etched (PE) metal fret featured cockpit detail, such as seat harnesses and the instrument panel; a second, plain fret was loaded with additions for the engines. Four pre-cut, self-adhesive masking sheets (for the glazing and wheels) plus two massive decal sheets ▶



▲ The propellors were treated as per the engines and exhausts, utilising an acrylic base and metal coat followed by an airbrushed application of 85 Coal Black. While still soft, the latter was weathered by applying actual scratches, utilising a dental probe.



▲ Resin machine guns were obtained to replace the kit's over-scale and simplified styrene versions, though it was decided to replace the highly fragile barrels with metal examples by Master Model. The resin examples were removed, holes drilled into the breeches, and the two-piece metal barrels simply superglued and pressed into position.

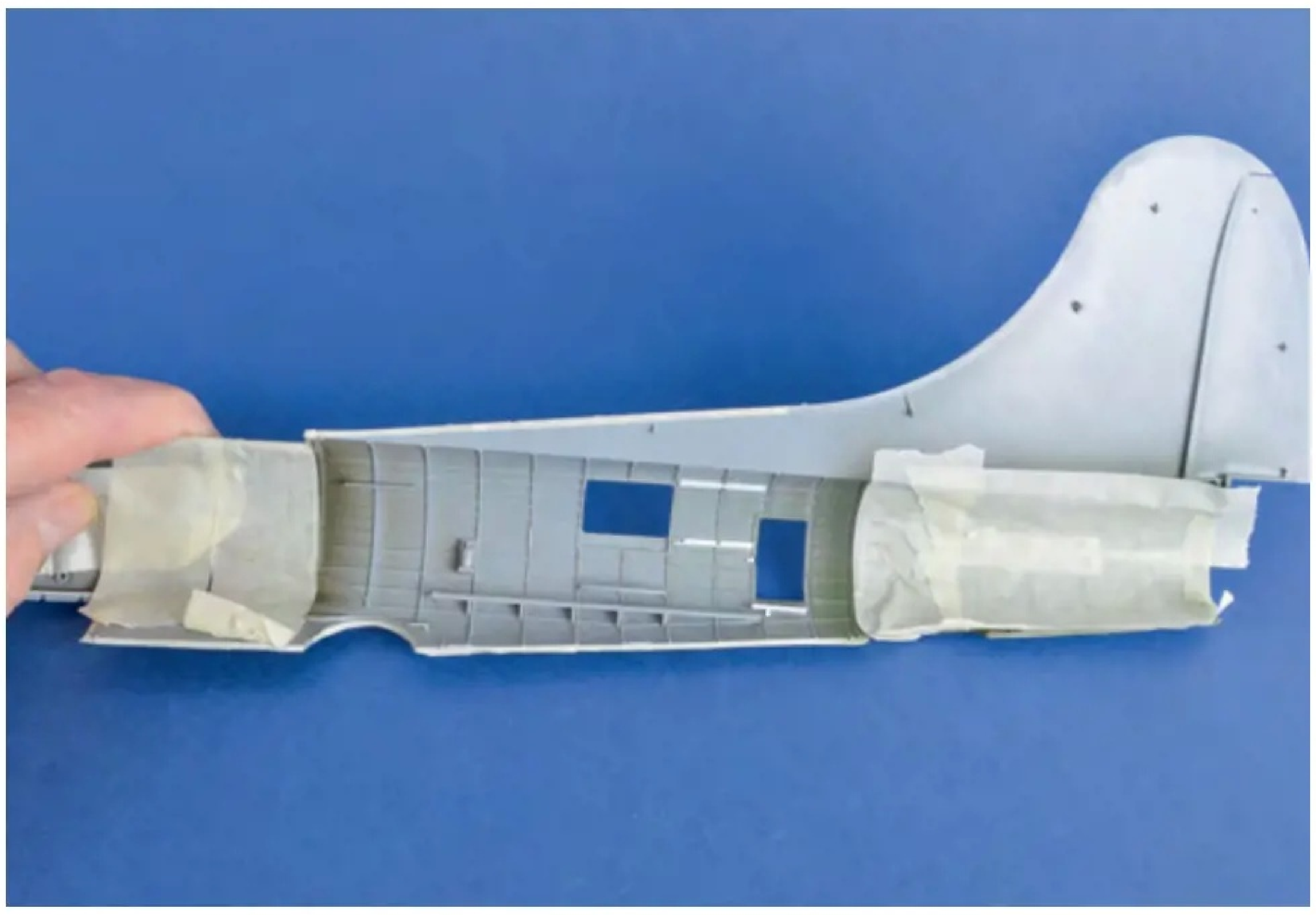
▲ It's always reassuring knowing the finished kit – especially if it's big and heavy – is going to be sitting on metal undercarriage legs. Eduard's bronze landing gear is a direct replacement for the styrene parts and needs no modification to fit, although the resin actuators were somewhat fiddly, and it proved challenging to install them without their appearing 'bowed'. Resin weighted wheels are often more visually appealing than styrene examples, with Eduard's BRASSIN offerings preferred here.

completed the package. The latter featured markings for all the 100th Bomber Group aircraft mentioned in the book and latterly featured in the Apple TV series *Masters of the Air* (2024), and as such were mightily impressive. The author waited in anticipation to discover which of the 14 Thorpe Abbotts's based schemes the customer would choose.

Confusing decisions

Unfortunately, the decision was to opt for 41-24605 *Knock-*

▲ Modern kits are produced to such exacting standards that there remains little in the way of tolerance between parts, meaning any trace of paint or unwanted dried glue on mating surfaces can prevent them from fitting correctly. Here thin strips of masking tape were used to mask seam lines within the fuselage.

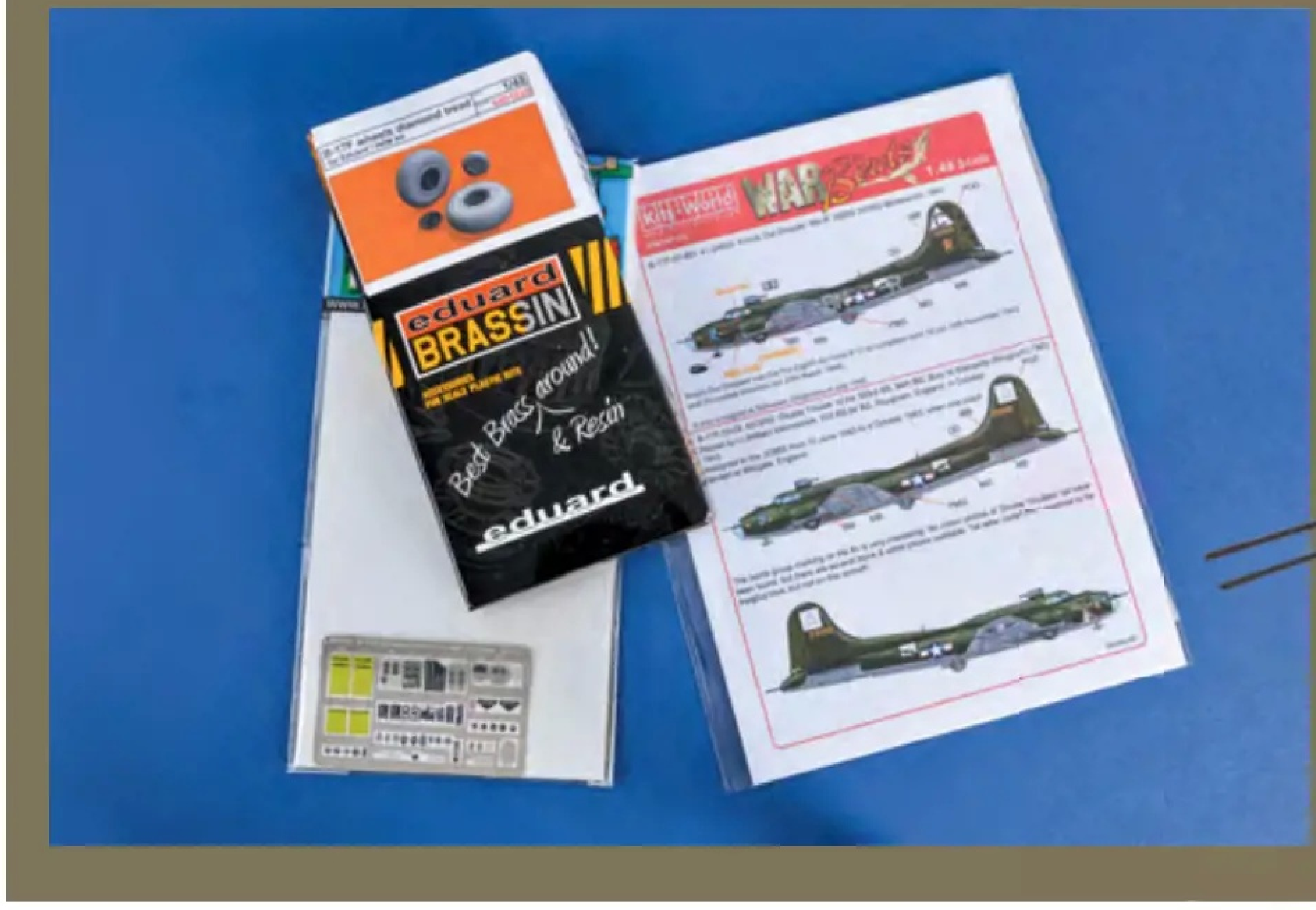


▲ References suggested the fuselage mid-section remained unpainted; the front and rear sections first received a darkened interior green shade, before being masked in preparation for 71.065 Steel. Visible towards the rear are a white styrene doorstep and a pair of runners, the latter added to support the open sliding hatch.

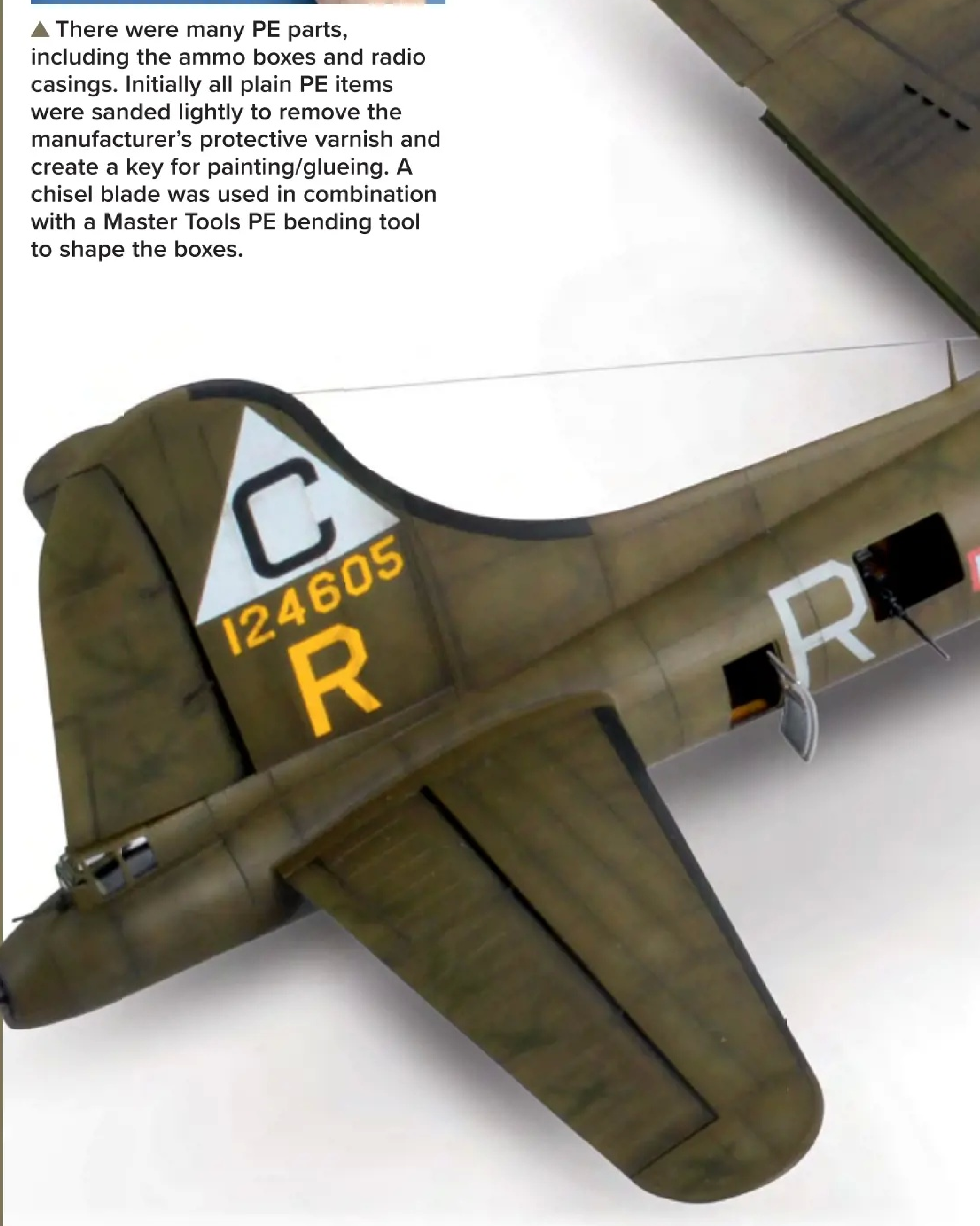
ADDING TO THE LOAD

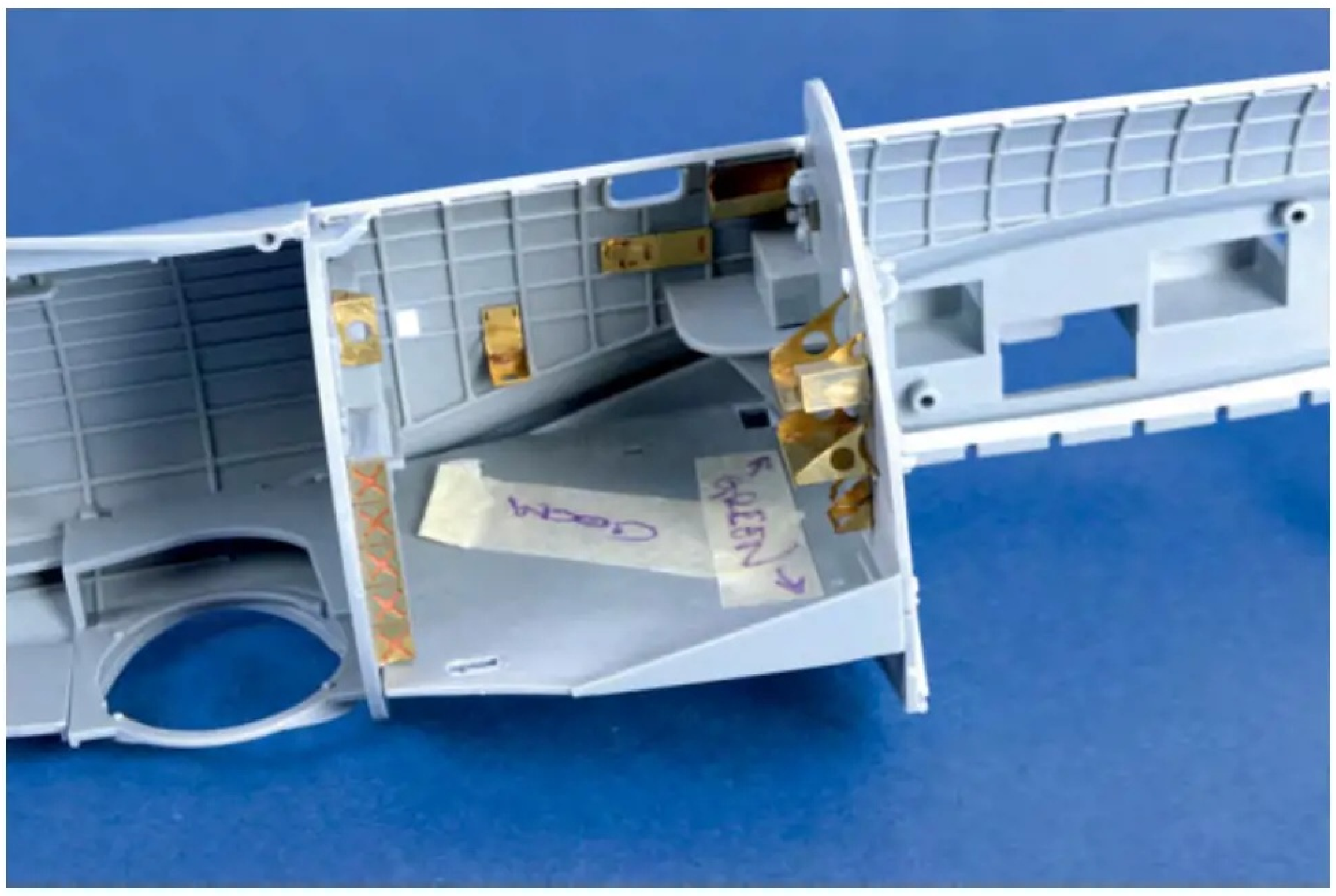
Many extras were incorporated into and onto the model, the most impressive of these being the resin engines and cowlings produced by Hungarian firm SBS Model. Plenty of Eduard's own aftermarket sets were added too, including resin machine guns and wheels, bronze undercarriage legs, plus several photo-etched (PE) brass sets – see materials at a glance for full details – including one (49337) that's designed for Revell's 1/48 B-17G but contains useful cockpit detail. Also utilised were Master's turned-brass gun barrels, as these were a more resilient replacement for the resin barrels. Last but by no means least were the replacement decals, these being sourced from Kits-World.

eduard
BRASSIN
Best Brass around! & Resin
eduard
BIG ED
MASTER

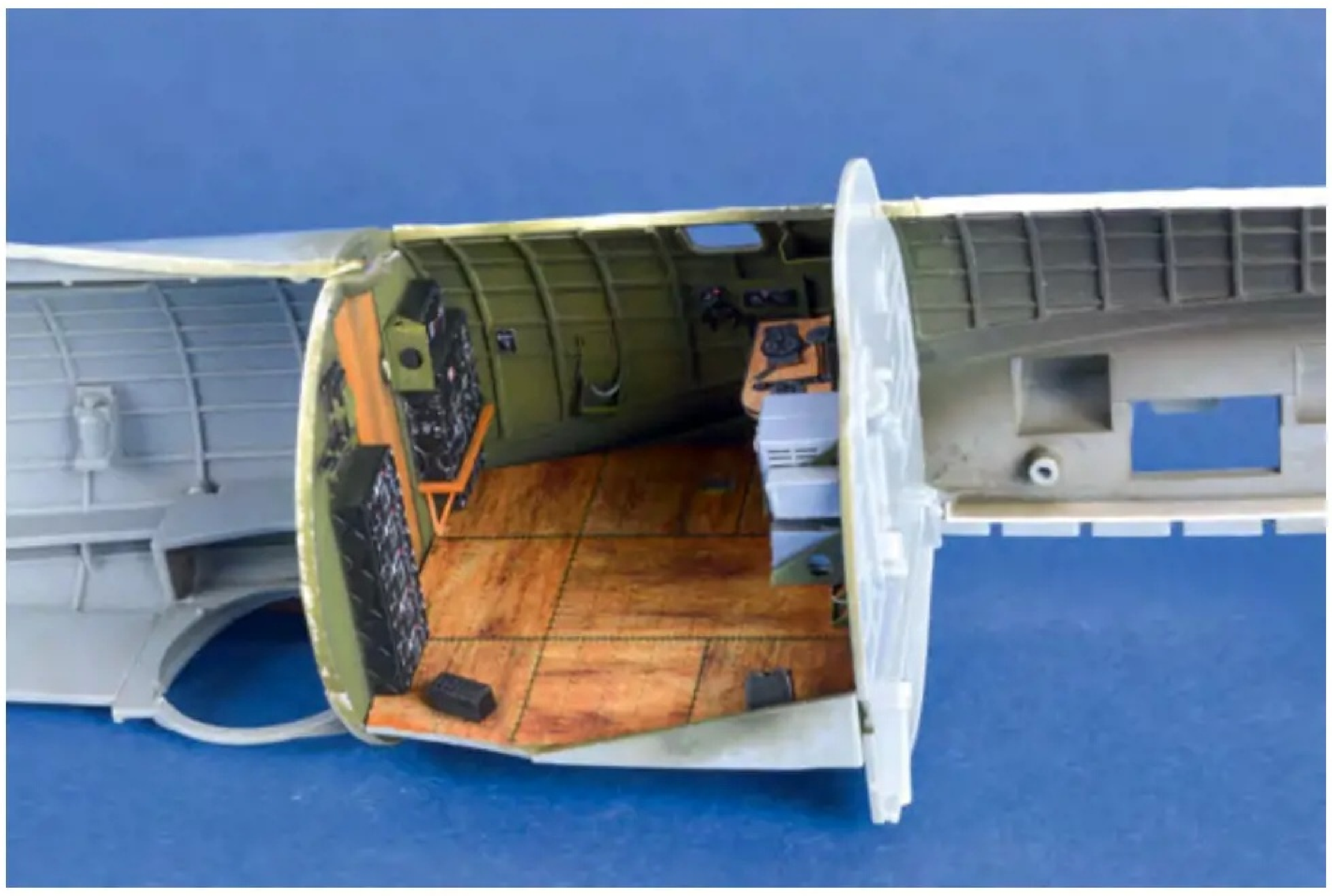


▲ There were many PE parts, including the ammo boxes and radio casings. Initially all plain PE items were sanded lightly to remove the manufacturer's protective varnish and create a key for painting/glueing. A chisel blade was used in combination with a Master Tools PE bending tool to shape the boxes.



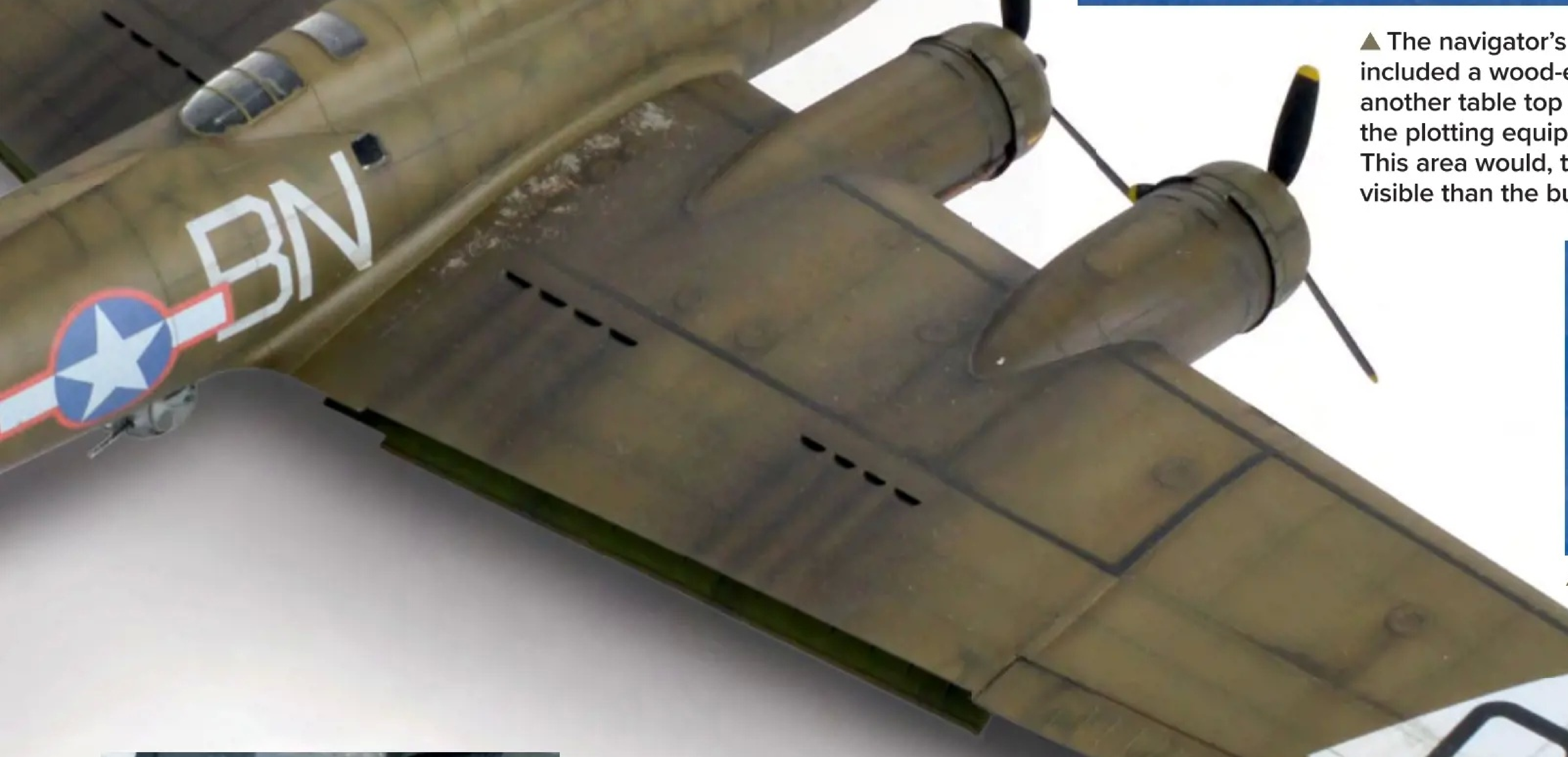


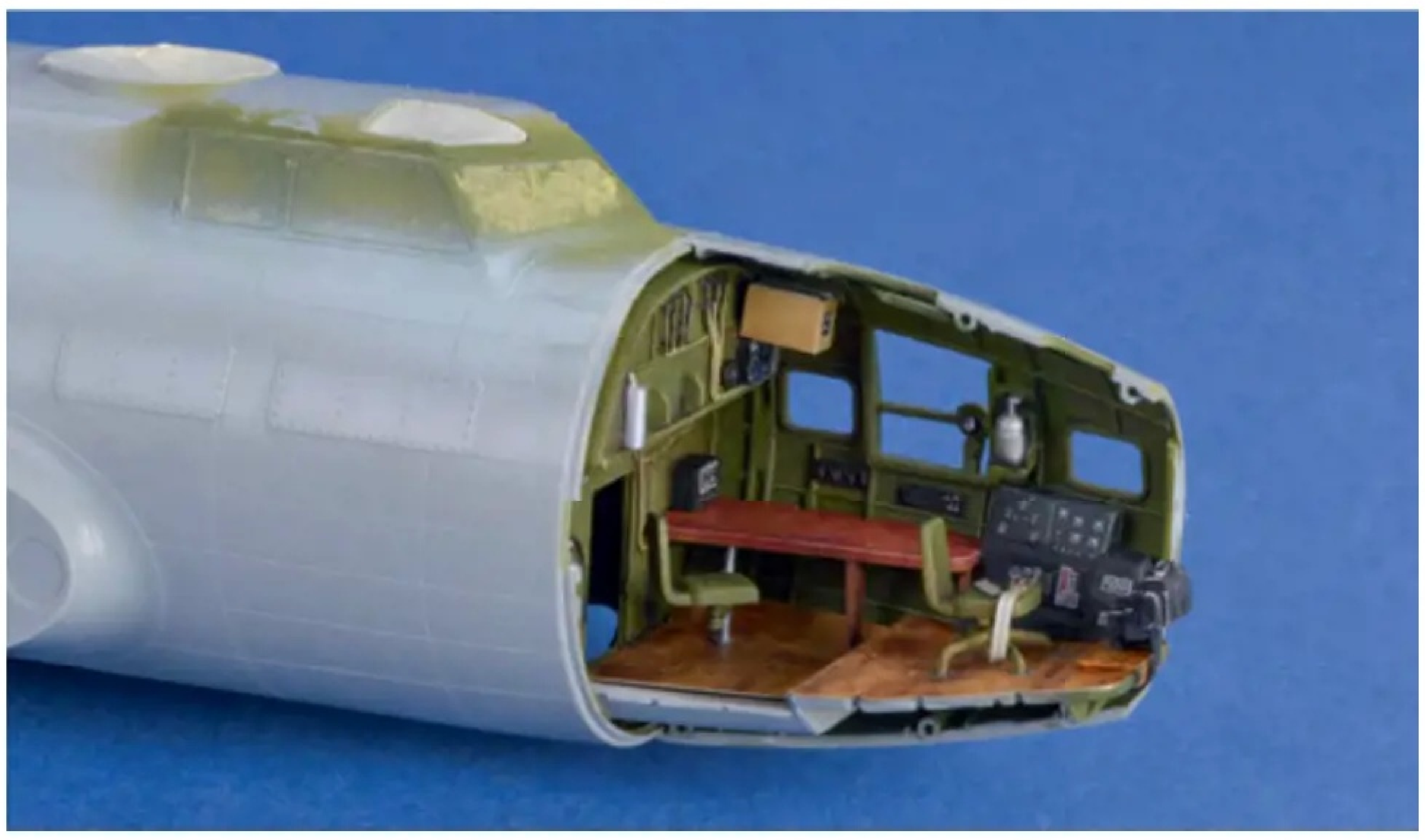
▲ Much of the plain brass was for the mid-fuselage radio compartment, and included not just the radios themselves, but the shelves upon which they sat, fire extinguisher supports, instrument panels and a storage compartment. All sub-assemblies were labelled to make painting more efficient and economical.



▲ The finesse created by Eduard's PE extras can be seen to good effect within the radio compartment. Here the wood-effect flooring and table top were particularly pleasing, though also notable are the detailed radio faces – which eased painting – and the plotting tools. All that was missing was a map of Berlin.

"The instructions, for the most part, were clear and concise"

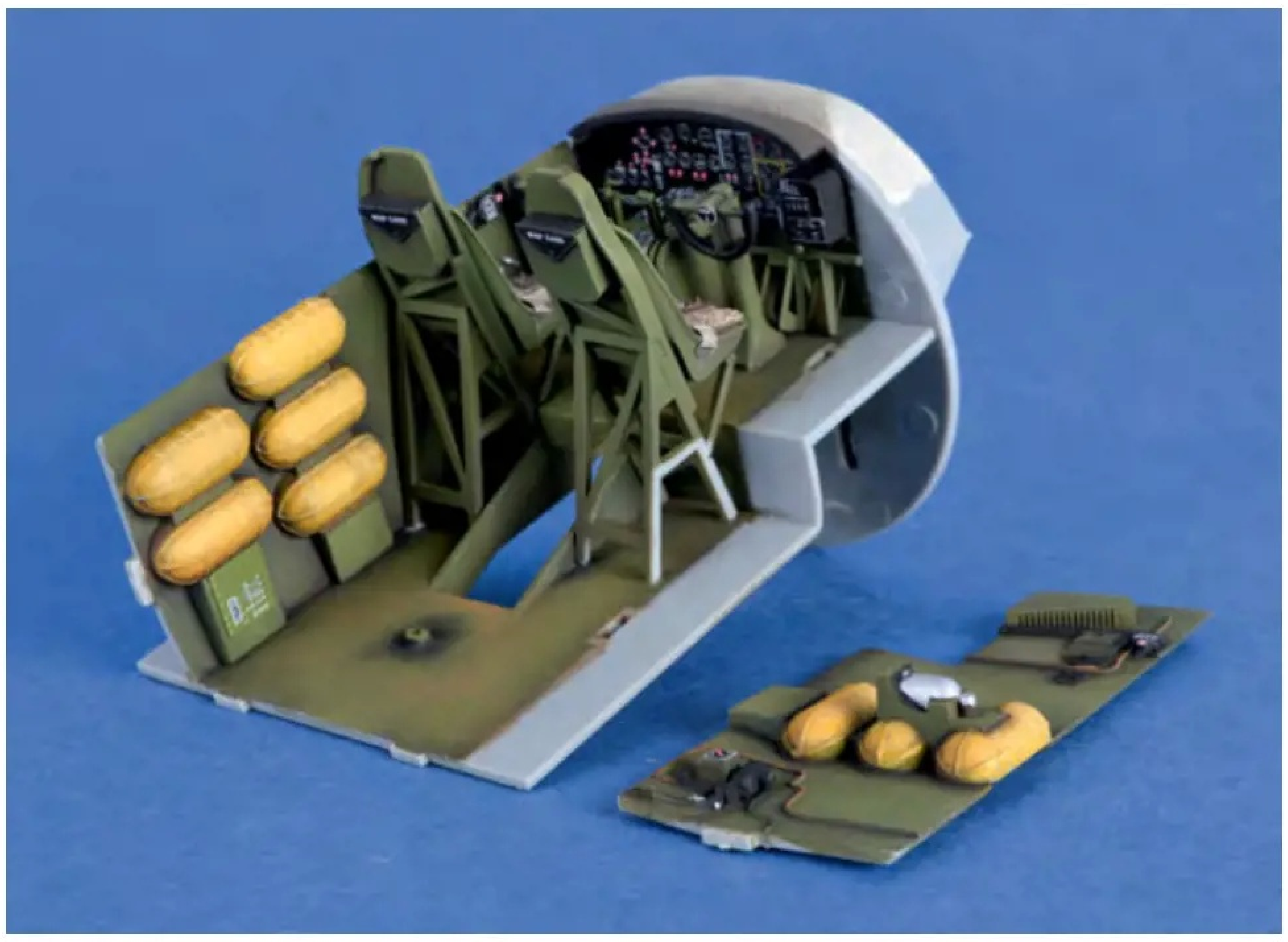




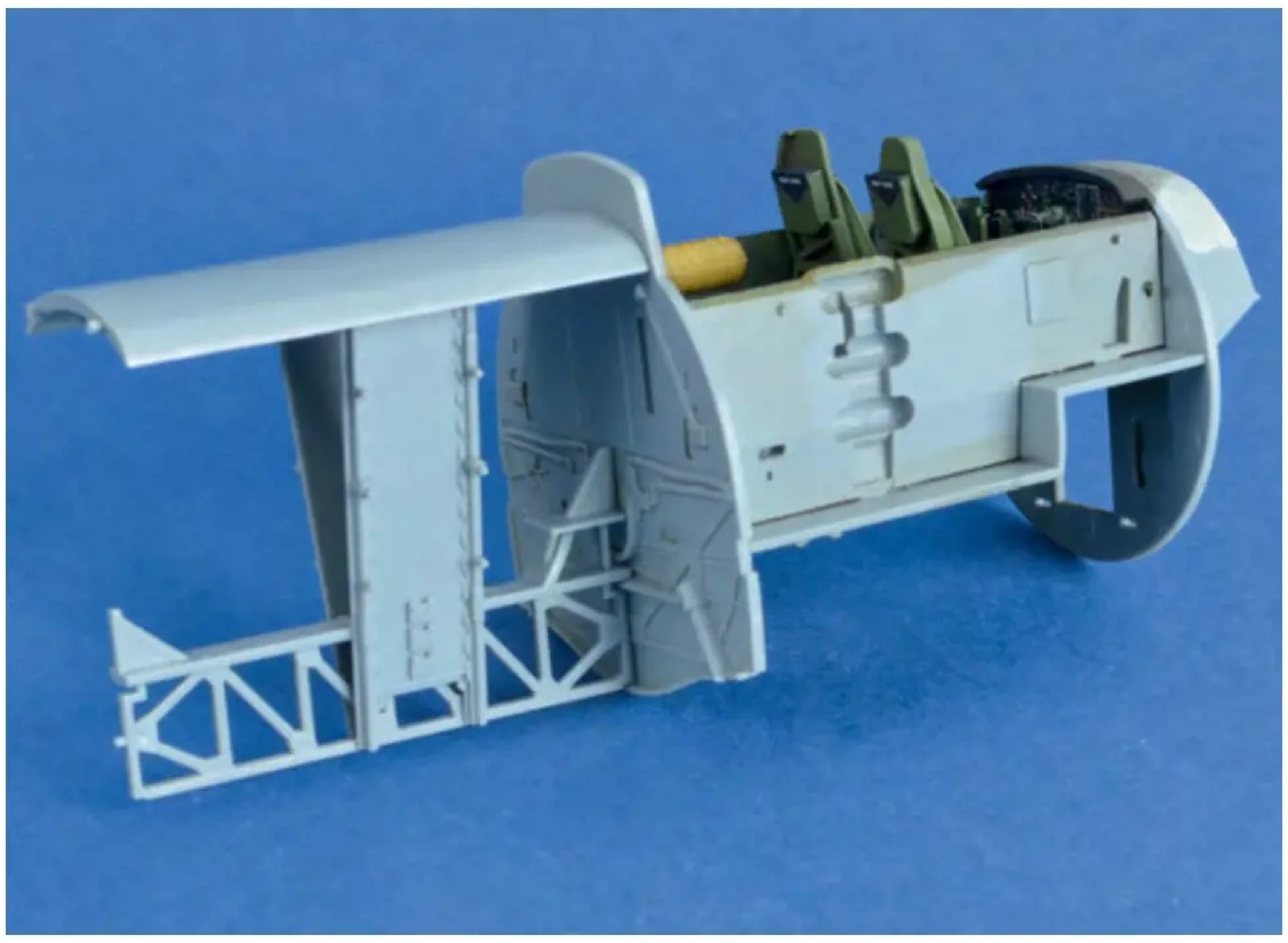
▲ The navigator's office was also a trove of detail and included a wood-effect floor and ammunition boxes, another table top (for which I wished I'd saved some of the plotting equipment), instrument panels and harness. This area would, thanks to the nose glazing, be far more visible than the busier radio compartment.

▲ Pilot and co-pilot seats were embellished with fur seat covers, made from Milliput, and PE boxes – the latter are ostensively designed to fit Revell's B-17G, but were ideal here.

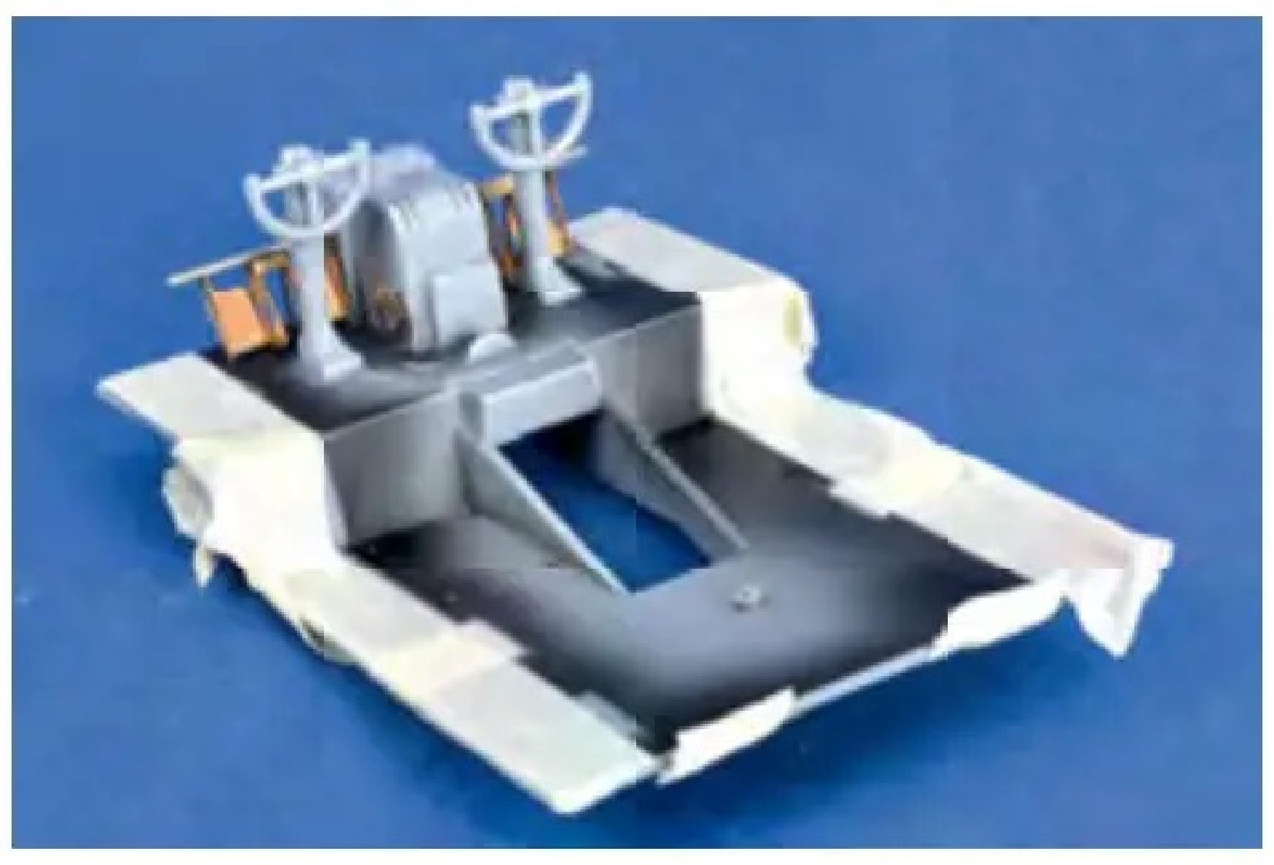
◀ Once the PE parts were bent into a box-like shape, superglue was run along the seams and allowed to dry, while the sides were held in place either by finger-power or utilising clamps.



▲ Beyond the crystal-clear glazing, the completed cockpit looked impressive enough, thanks in part to the pre-painted PE additions. The rudimentary nature of many interior styrene structures is exemplified by the half-round compressed-air cylinders and basic fire extinguisher.

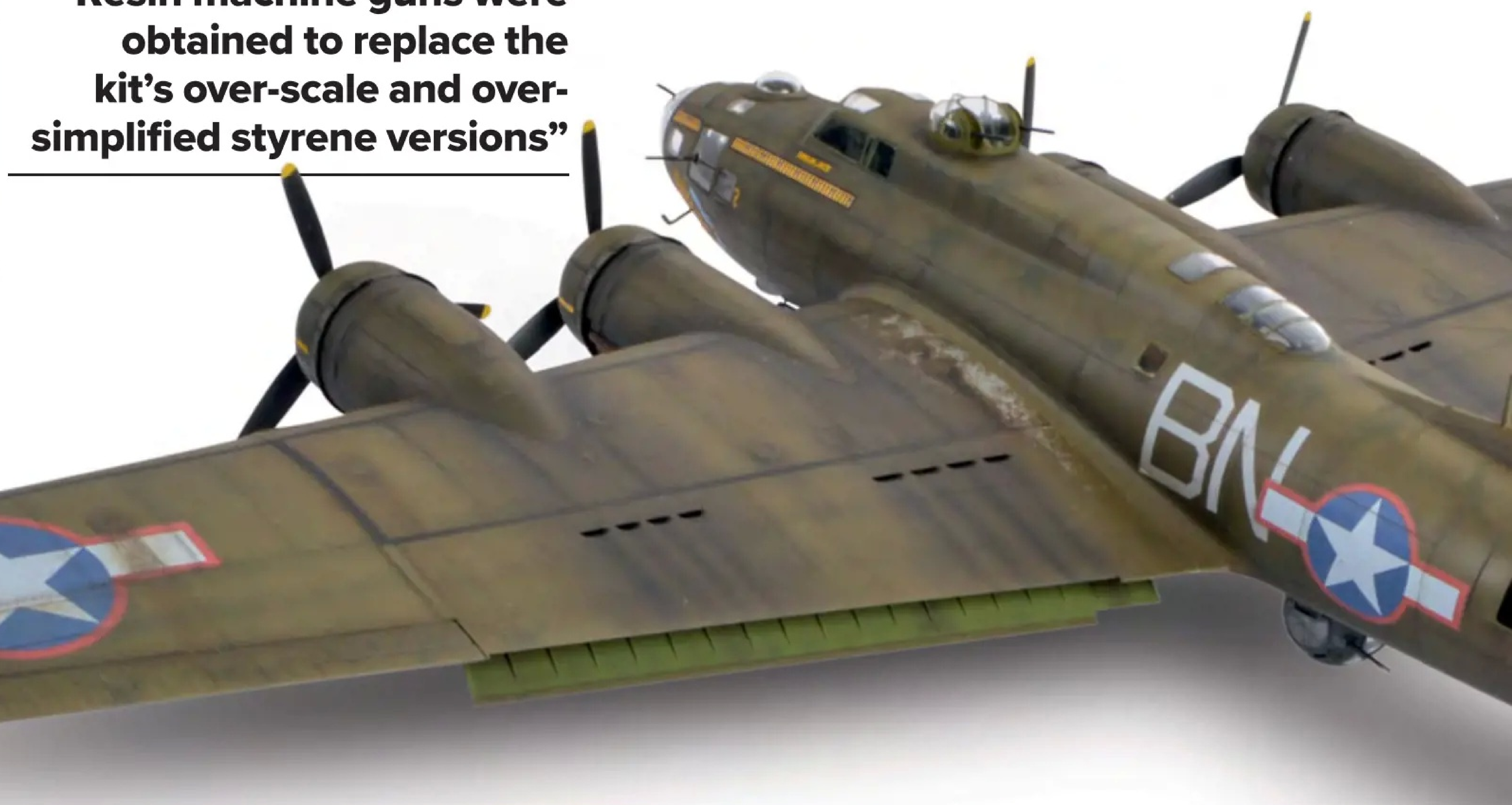


▲ It was decided to close the bomb bay, though an open option was available. Initially, the internal set of bomb racks and the roof were added, though ultimately discarded, when it was discovered that their absence would not negatively affect the kit's structural integrity.

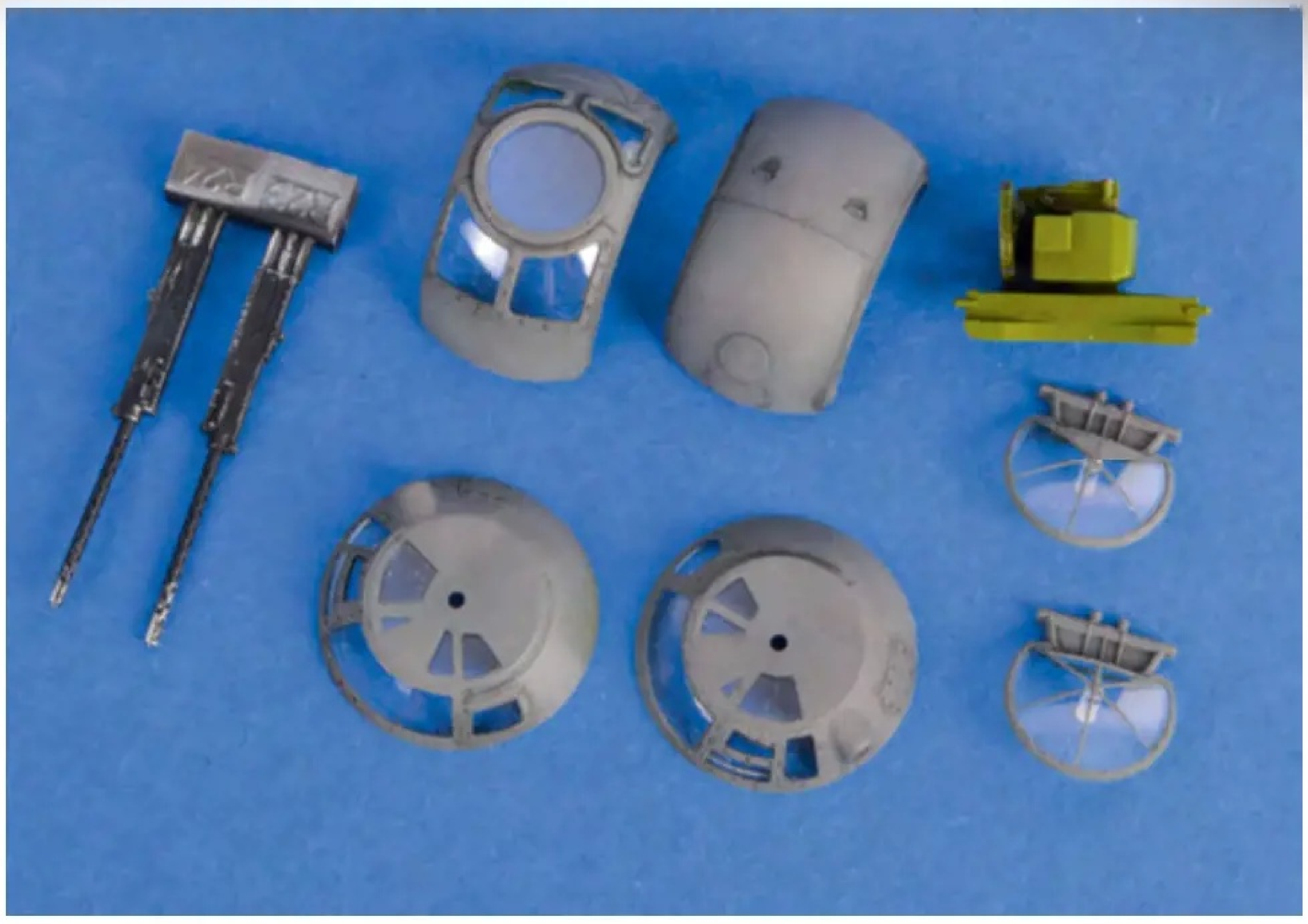


▲ When built straight from the box, the cockpit was rather sparsely furnished, notably the rudder pedals. Again, the B-17G set proved invaluable, supplying far superior PE replacements.

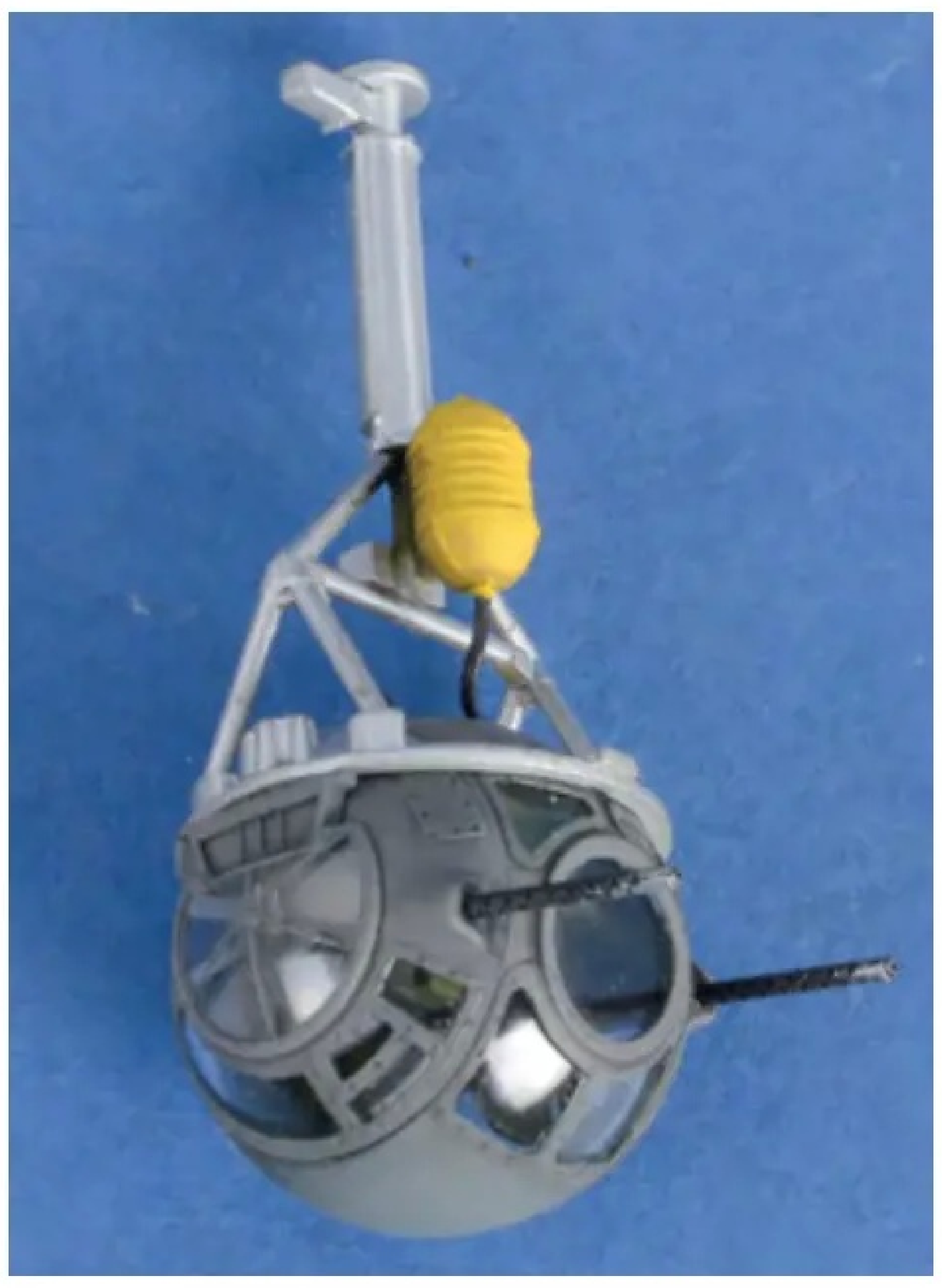
> **"Resin machine guns were obtained to replace the kit's over-scale and over-simplified styrene versions"**



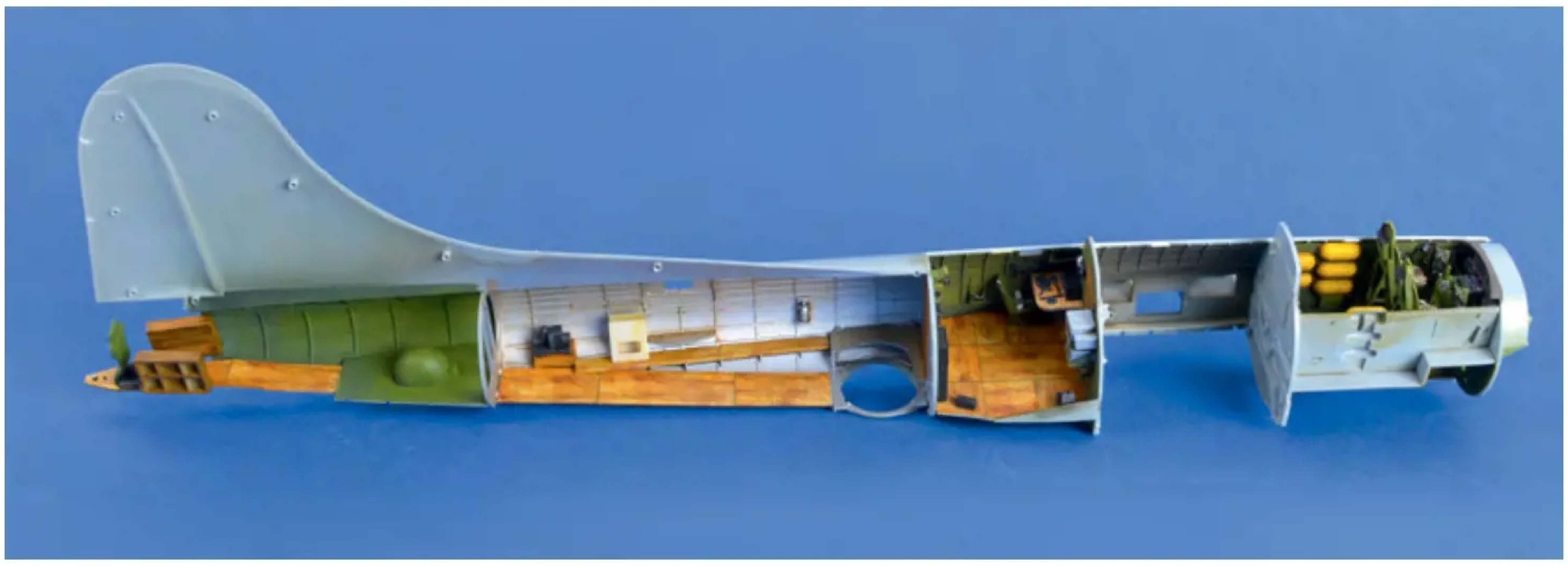
▲ There was obviously plenty of glazing to mask, and the inclusion of Eduard's pre-cut, self-adhesive sets – of which there were four – minimised this otherwise tiresome task. Masking instructions were comprehensive, covering six entire pages, but they were made relatively straightforward by being colour coded.



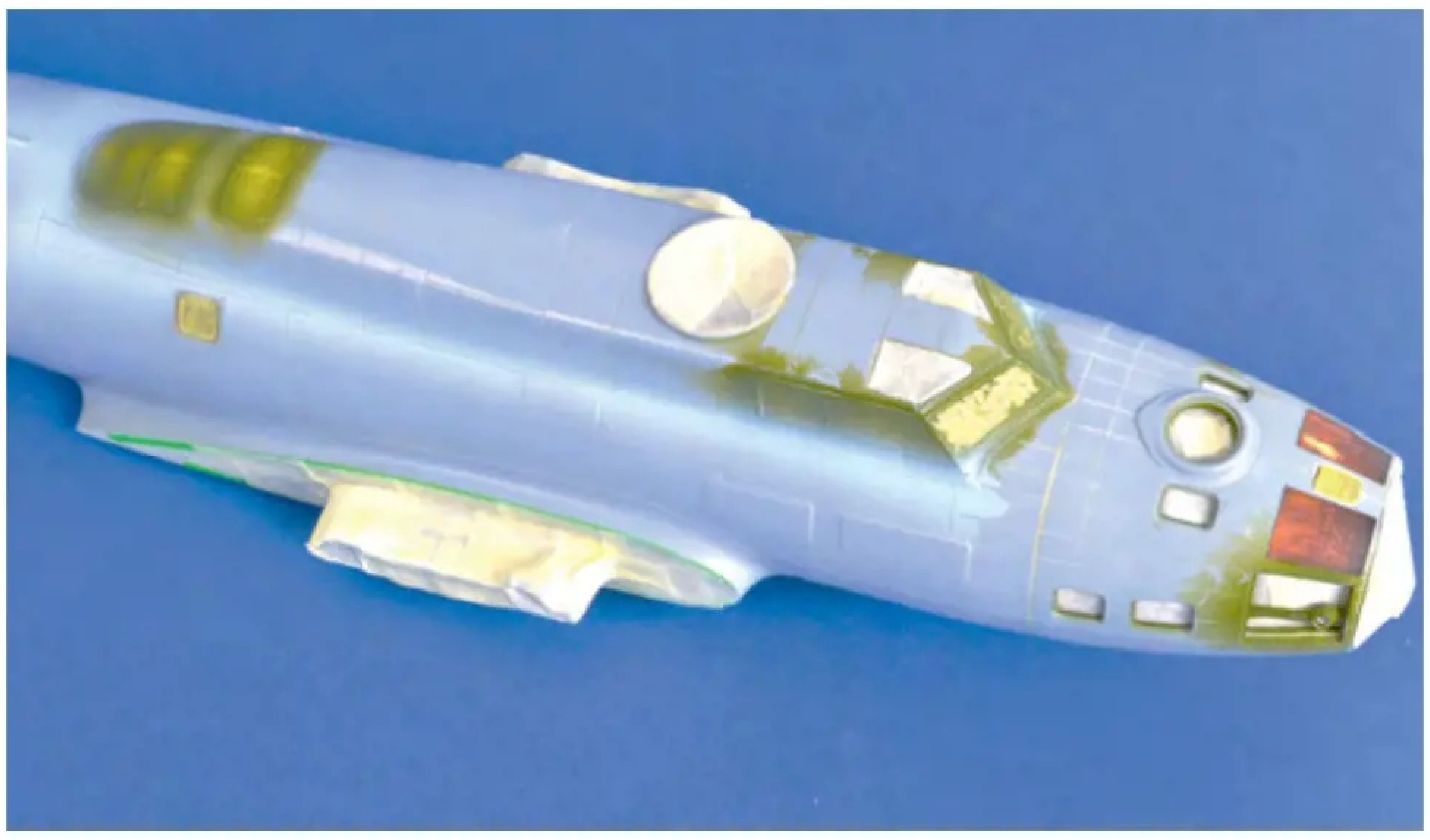
▲ Each sub-assembly comprised multiple components; those of the ventral ball-turret mainly being transparencies, all of which required careful masking. The resin machine guns required considerable trimming before they would fit within the confines of the glazed turret, with 2mm removed from the rears.



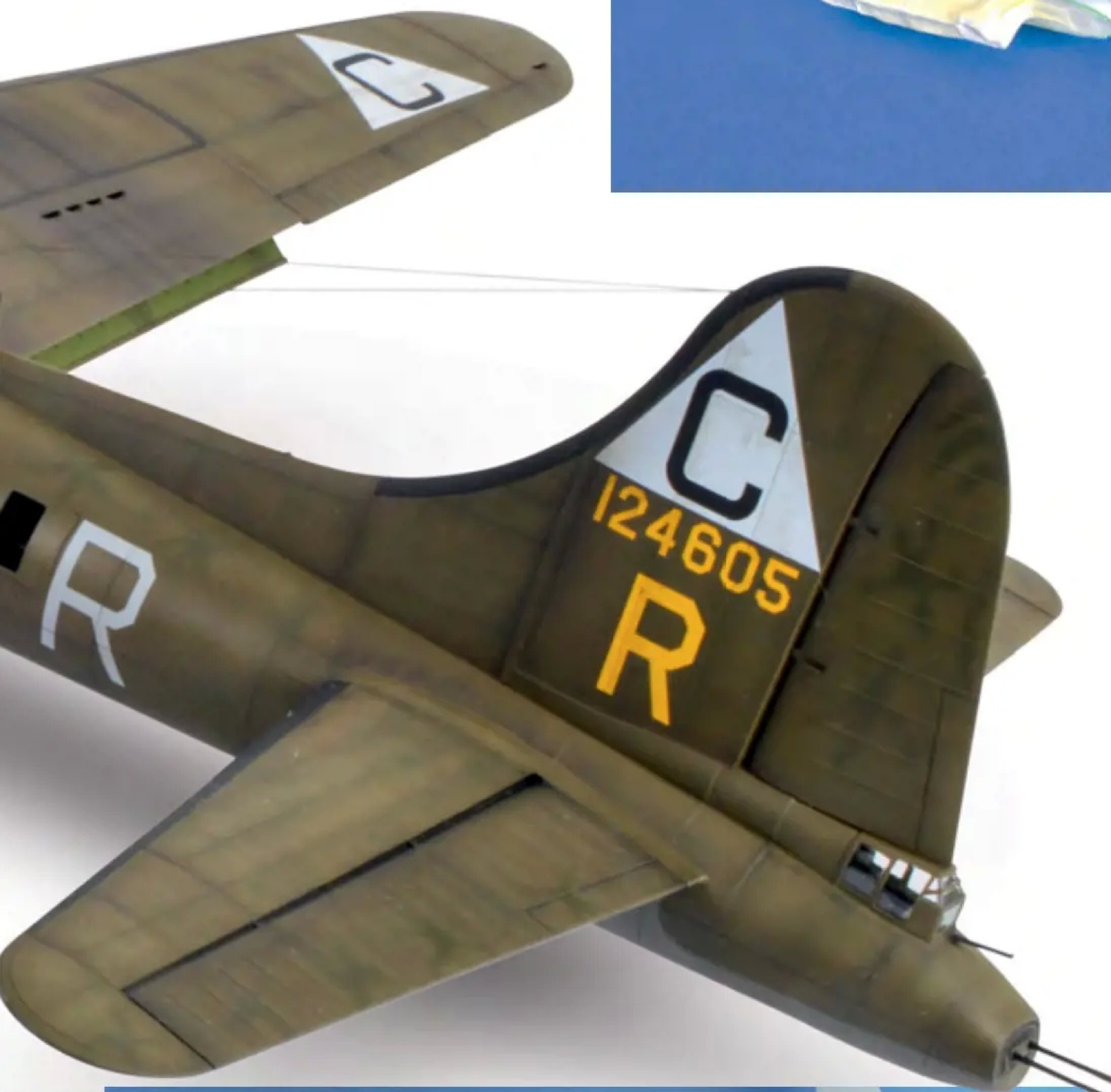
▲ The ball turret, complete with its internal mount and compressed air bottle. So crowded was it within the tiny turret, there appeared no room for a crew figure; while the author was equally certain there would have been no power on earth that would have persuaded him to get inside a full-sized version for a trip to Berlin and back.



▲ Everything in its place: unfortunately, much of the lavish detail would remain all but invisible once the fuselage halves were cemented together, but as the customer remarked: "At least we know it's in there."

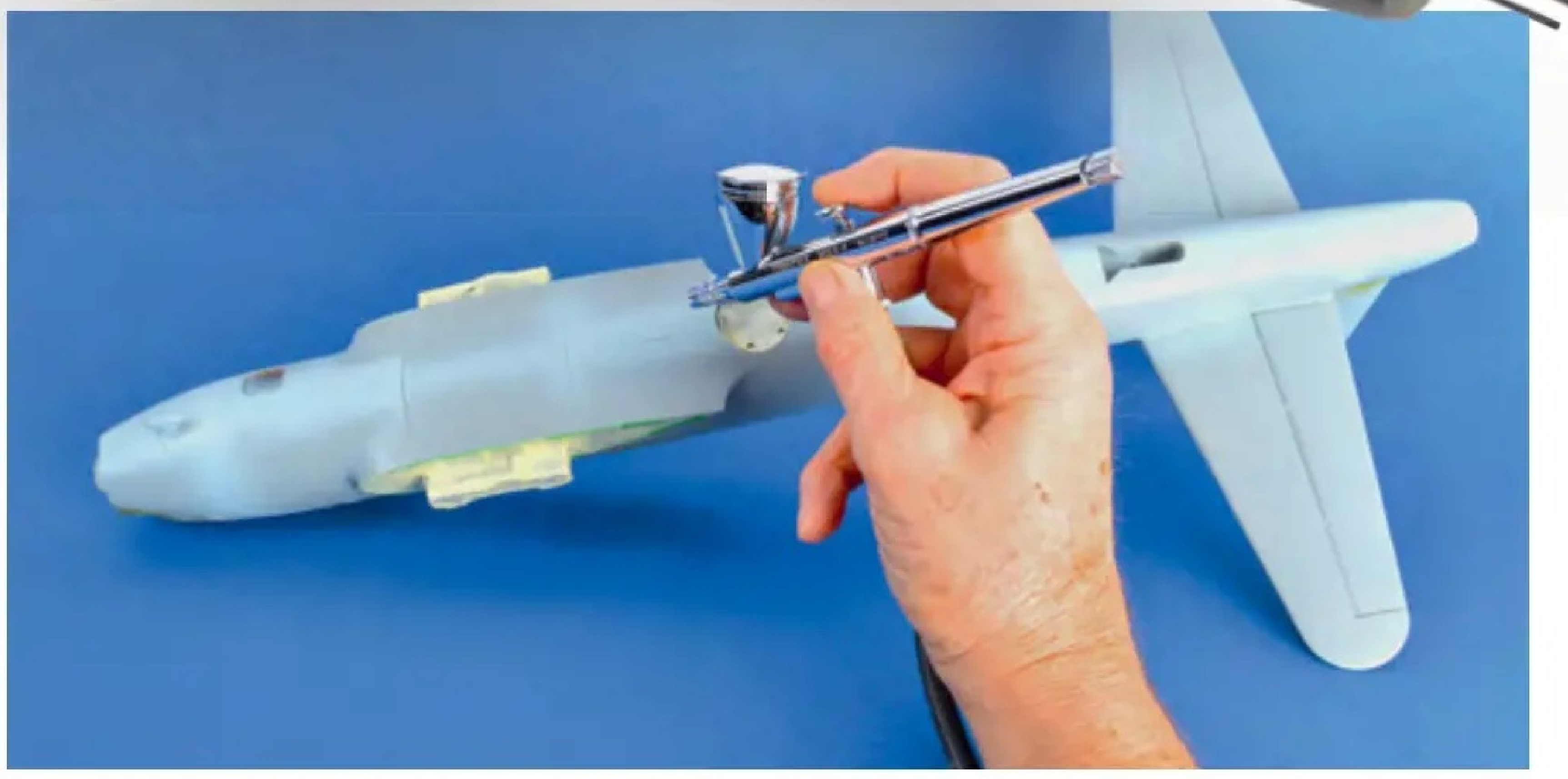


◀ With the majority of transparencies masked, the frames were sprayed with interior green. Next, Alclad Grey Primer was used to check the neatness of all major seams, and where necessary was wet sanded using Micro-Mesh cloths. This lacquer-based high-build primer is almost impossible to obtain (I sourced a supply from Japan to replenish my stocks) in the UK, having supposedly been superseded by AMMO's A-Stand products. However, I have tried the Grey Primer and found it greatly inferior to the Alclad original.



Out Dropper, assigned to the 359 Bomb Squadron, 303 Bomb Group, based at RAF Molesworth, England. Although this particular airframe was flown on 80 combat missons, before being returned to the US and employed on a nationwide war bonds tour it wasn't among the kit schemes (although it was included in HK Models' 1/32 B-17F releases).

This meant that the beautifully moulded Eduard nose sections would have to be ignored in favour of the original versions; while well produced, they require considerable glazing to complete. It also led to a degree of confusion with the instructions – presented as two A4 booklets – as these appeared to be very similar, although each featured different colour schemes (and therefore ▶



◀ When applying high-build primers, which by their nature tend to be more viscous than normal paints, I prefer my Sparmax MAX-4, fitted with a 0.4mm needle and nozzle combination. This airbrush still allows precise application, but the larger nozzle size reduces the chance of blockages when used in combination with thicker materials.

MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

Alclad (www.alclad2.com)
ALC-302 Grey Primer & Microfiller

SBS Model (www.sbsmodel.com)
48090 B-17 F/G (Early) Engine & Cowling set

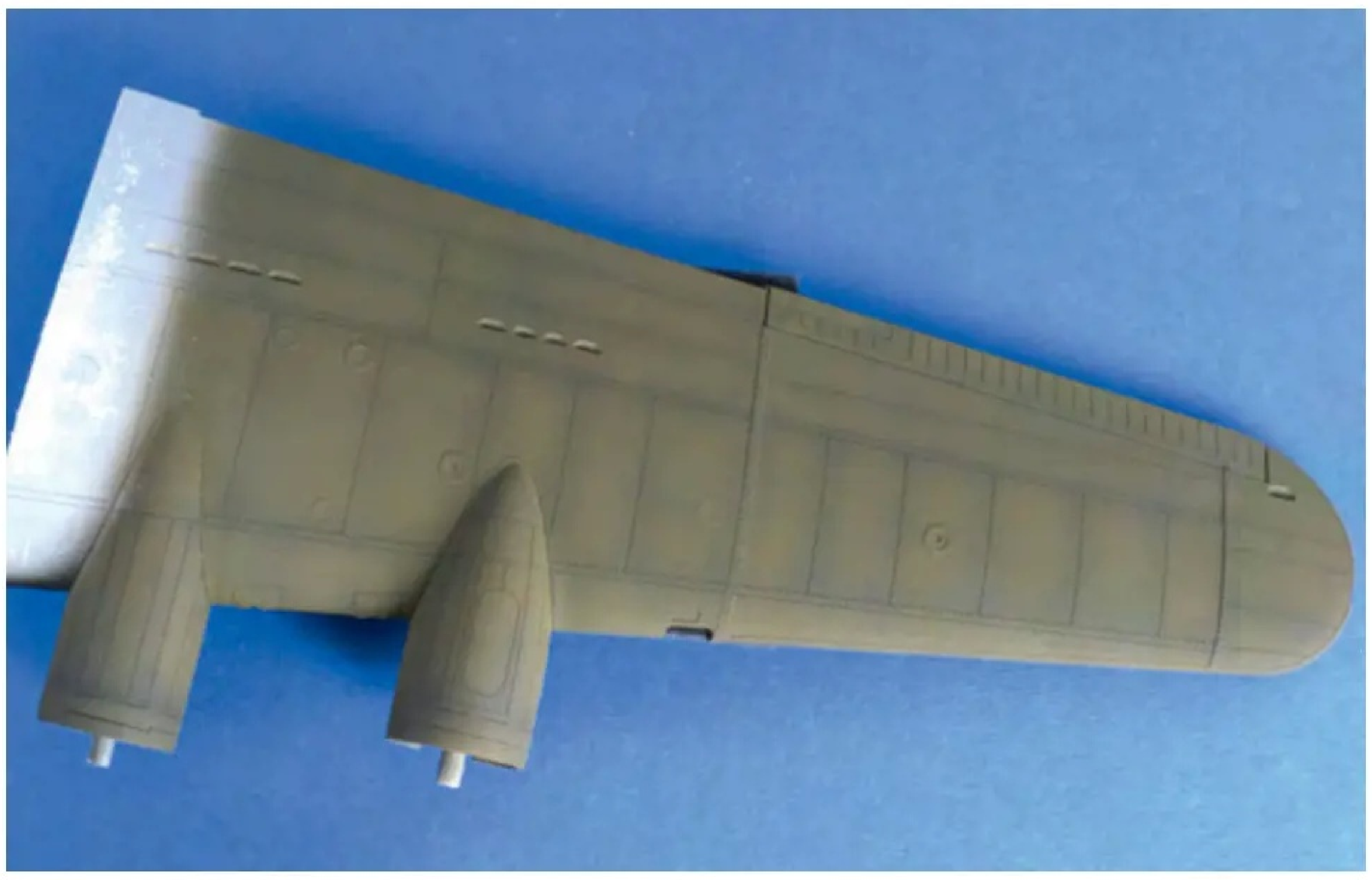
Eduard (www.eduard.com)
49337 B-17G cockpit interior
491072 Wooden Floors & Ammo Boxes
6481020 B-17F Wheels Diamond Tread
6481022 B-17F undercarriage legs BRONZE
6481023 B-17F Guns

Master Model (www.master-model.pl)
AM-48-138 Boeing B-17F/B-17G Flying Fortress – machine gun set

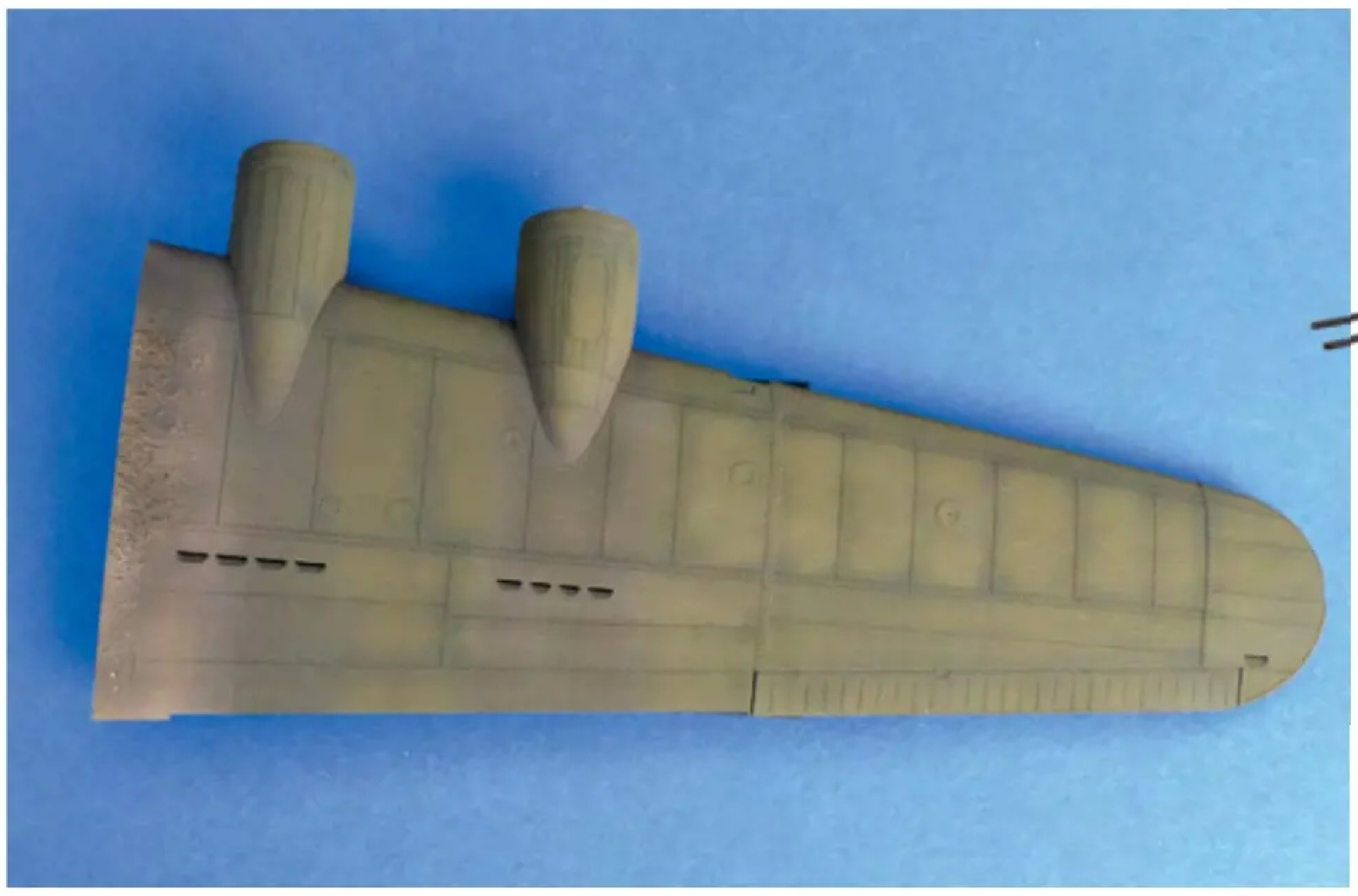
Kits-World (www.kitsworld.co.uk)
KW148130 Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress

Vallejo (www.creativemodels.co.uk)
71.065 Steel
73.602 Black Primer

Humbrol (https://uk.humbrol.com)
29 Dark Earth
46 Orange
85 Coal Black
155 Olive Drab
186 Red Brown
AC5601 Matt Varnish
AC5401 Satin Varnish

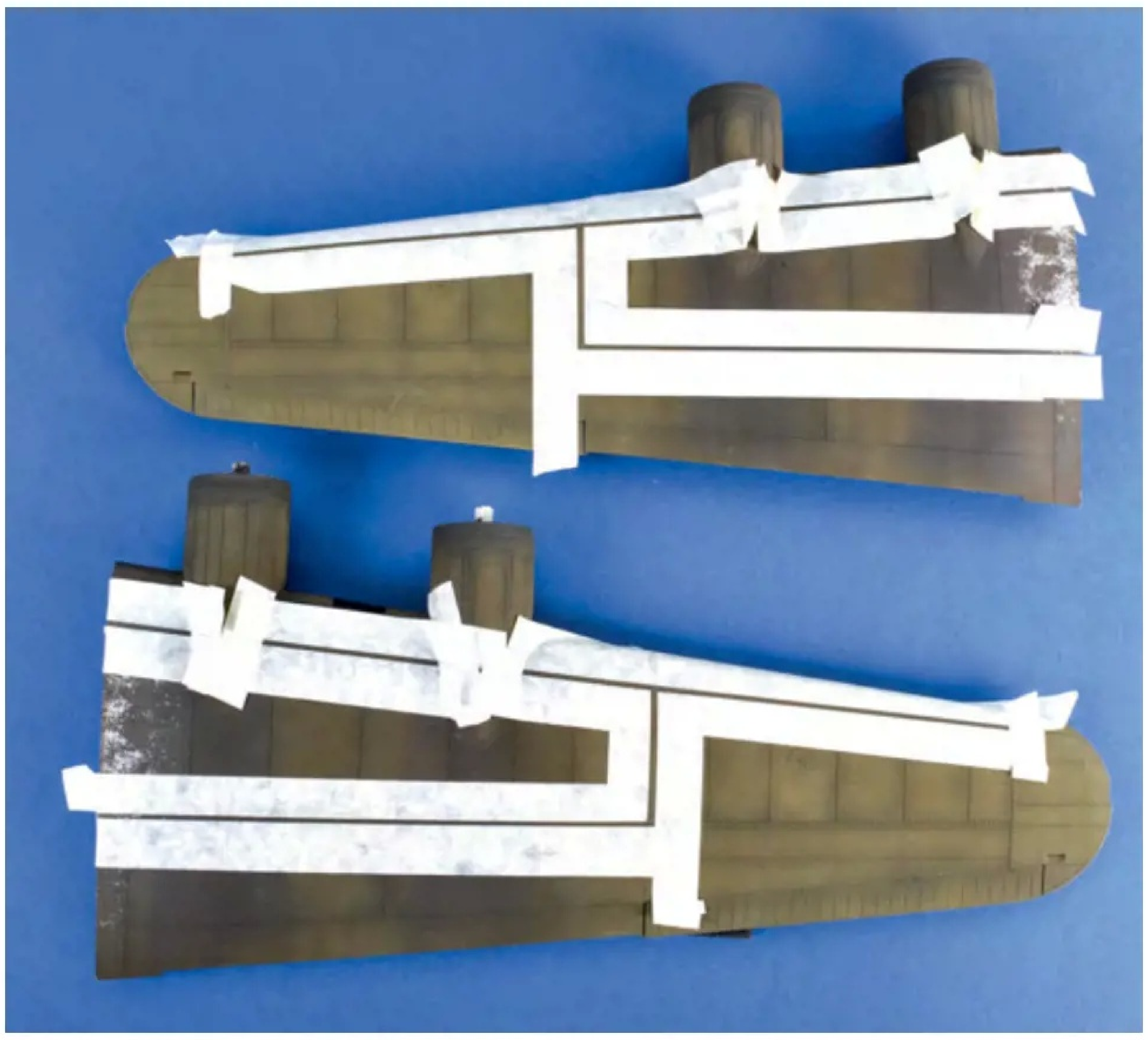


▲ Wing weathering began with an overall black enamel basecoat, which was dry sanded, prior to a coat of acrylic steel being airbrushed along the wing roots. When dry, a soft, flat brush was used to dampen the area with water prior to salt being scattered along the walkway.

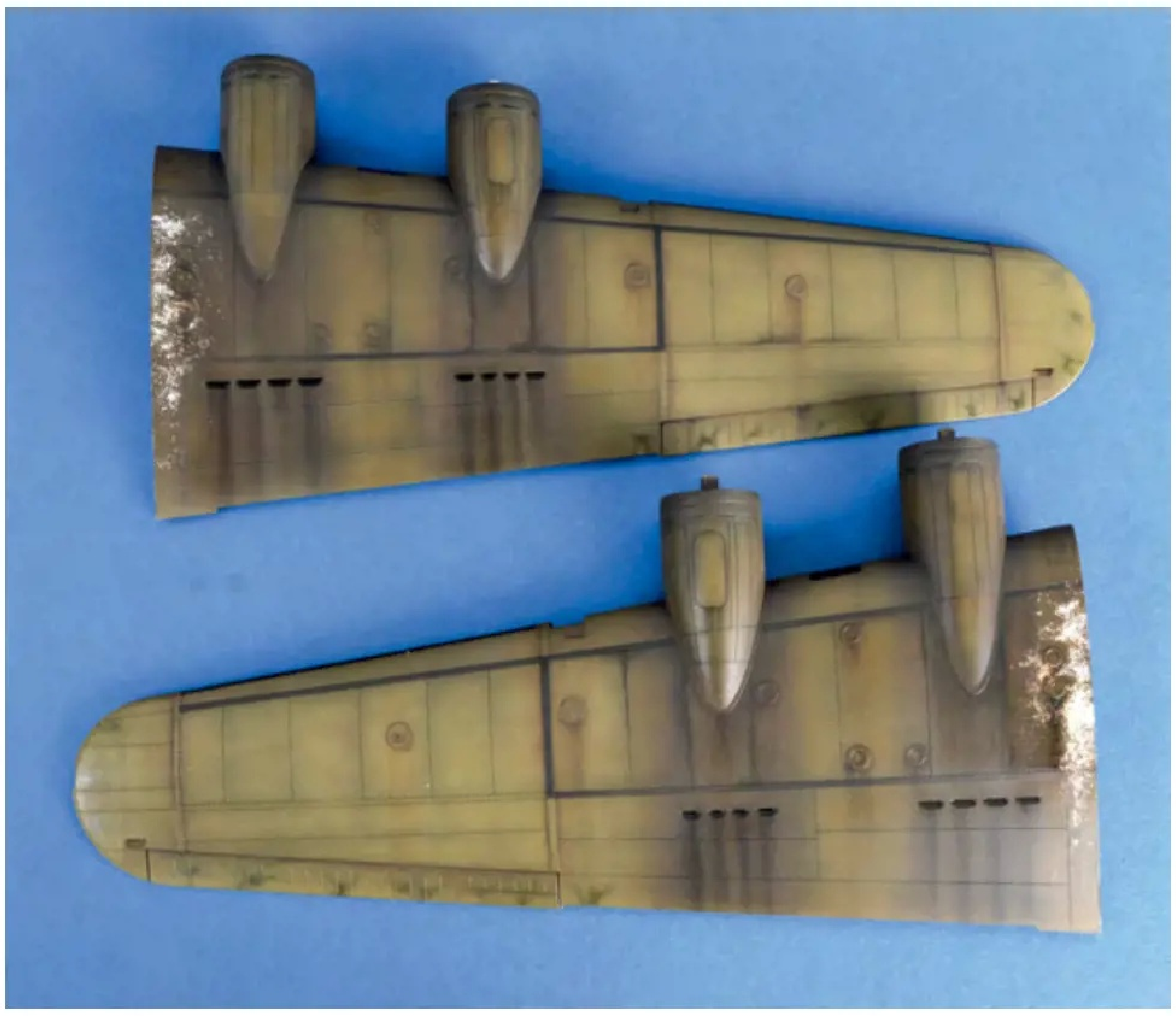


▲ Next, a Dark Earth and Olive Drab enamel mix was airbrushed over the salt and left to dry overnight. The photo shows the early stages of the application, with a hint of the steel coat remaining. Several passes of the airbrush were made, building the tonal depth until it matched the rest of the wing.

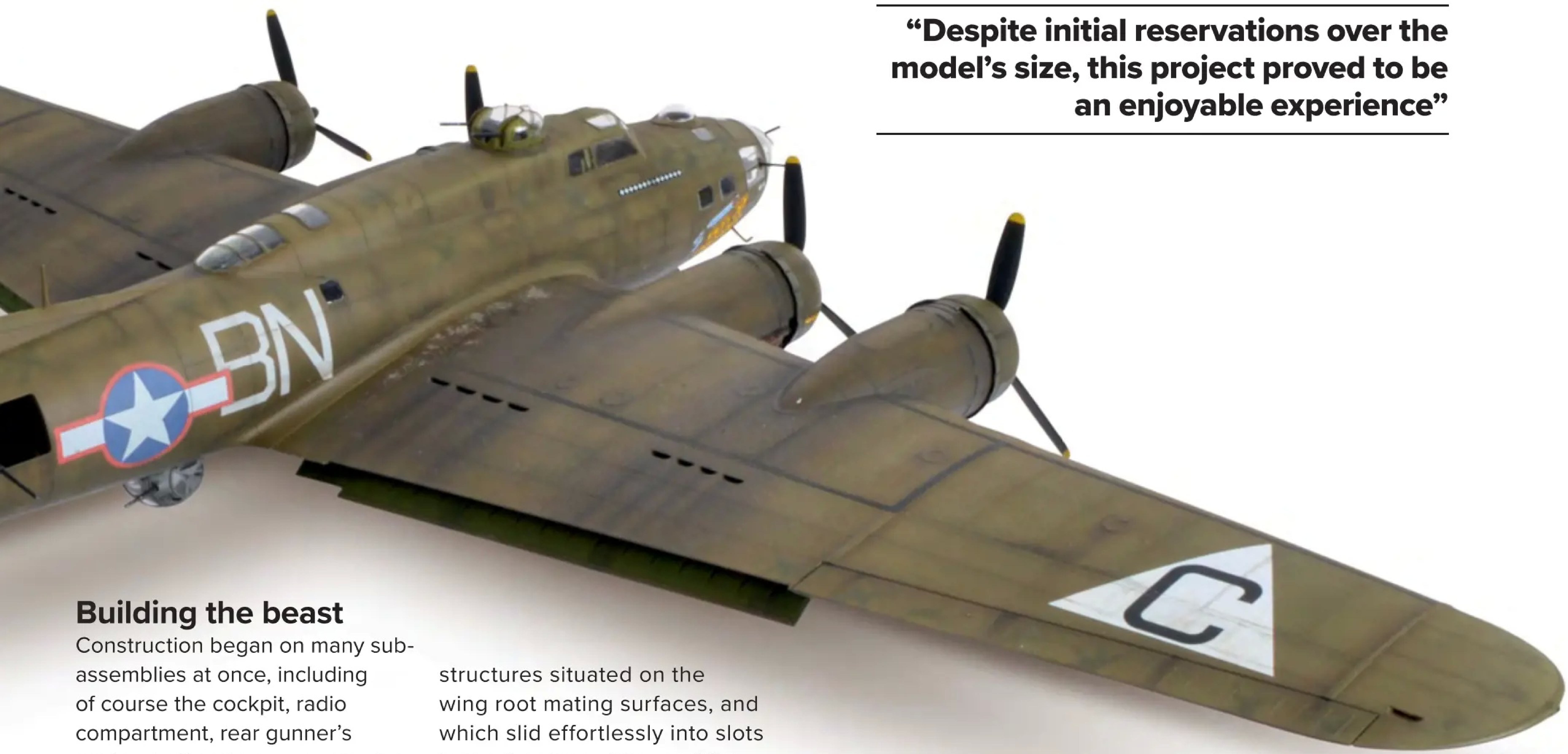
different nose configurations). They were complicated enough, without having to identify the ‘older’ nose sections among the multiple sets of similar drawings. Relying on a series of wartime photographs depicting the chosen airframe to try and ascertain which parts were required, I became somewhat befuddled (I blame my age), all of which lead to an unfortunately unchangeable mistake on the airframe, so you may notice the presence of a bulged astrodome on the model’s nose that really shouldn’t be there. Thankfully, the customer wasn’t at all bothered by the unintented structural addition.



▲ Once the Olive Drab coat was thoroughly dry, the salt was removed with a stiff brush, after which masking tape was applied in order to spray the walkway markings. This method was felt preferable to using the decals supplied.



▲ Almost there: the airbrushed weathering comprised black/brown enamel mixes being applied in a fan-like pattern emanating from the rear of the engine cooling flaps and exhaust ports. Light olive patches were also added along the upper wing and fuselage areas.



“Despite initial reservations over the model’s size, this project proved to be an enjoyable experience”

Building the beast

Construction began on many sub-assemblies at once, including of course the cockpit, radio compartment, rear gunner’s station, ball and upper turret plus undercarriage bays, to name but a few. The instructions, for the most part, were clear and concise, though attention must be paid to the colour scheme references that are marked throughout in Eduard’s usual style, indicating slight variations between airframes. Care was taken to keep all mating surfaces free from paint by masking them with thin strips of tape prior to any airbrush work, and when it came time to close the fuselage halves, they went together easily, despite the amount of PE and styrene crammed inside.

The wings also came together easily, the only modifications required being boxes built from plastic card and cemented internally to blank the otherwise gaping leading edge intakes. Flaps were to be posed in the lowered position, so these items were added later, while the aftermarket resin engine nacelles were assembled and painted separately. Due to the model’s size, the assembled wings were not slotted onto the fuselage immediately, but would be painted separately and the three sub-sections only brought together at the end. To that end, the chunky locking structures situated on the wing root mating surfaces, and which slid effortlessly into slots in the fuselage sides, locking them into place, were also masked carefully to prevent any problems that might affect this process later.

Fabulous Fortress

Despite initial reservations over this model’s substantial size, this project proved to be an enjoyable experience throughout. Hong Kong Models’ 1/48 B-17 Flying Fortress is a relatively straightforward build out of the box, aided by the airframe being split into three parts; the fuselage and the separate wing sub-assemblies, which simply slotted together after painting with minimal touching-up required at the wing roots.

The only negative aspect encountered was the simplicity of many internal components and the sparsity of detail within the fuselage’s centre section, which would be visible if the doors and hatches are posed open. But such a minor quibble should not distract from the fact that when the mighty quarter-scale bomber is standing on its metal undercarriage legs, it makes for a convincing and impressive replica. And it’s a fitting tribute to the crews of the ‘Mighty Eighth’ bombers. AMW

▲ A large model requires a sizeable cupful of paint for efficient coverage, and thankfully the author had a Sparmax GP35 in his arsenal. Fitted with a 3.5mm needle and nozzle combination, large-area coverage was possible to expedite the painting process.

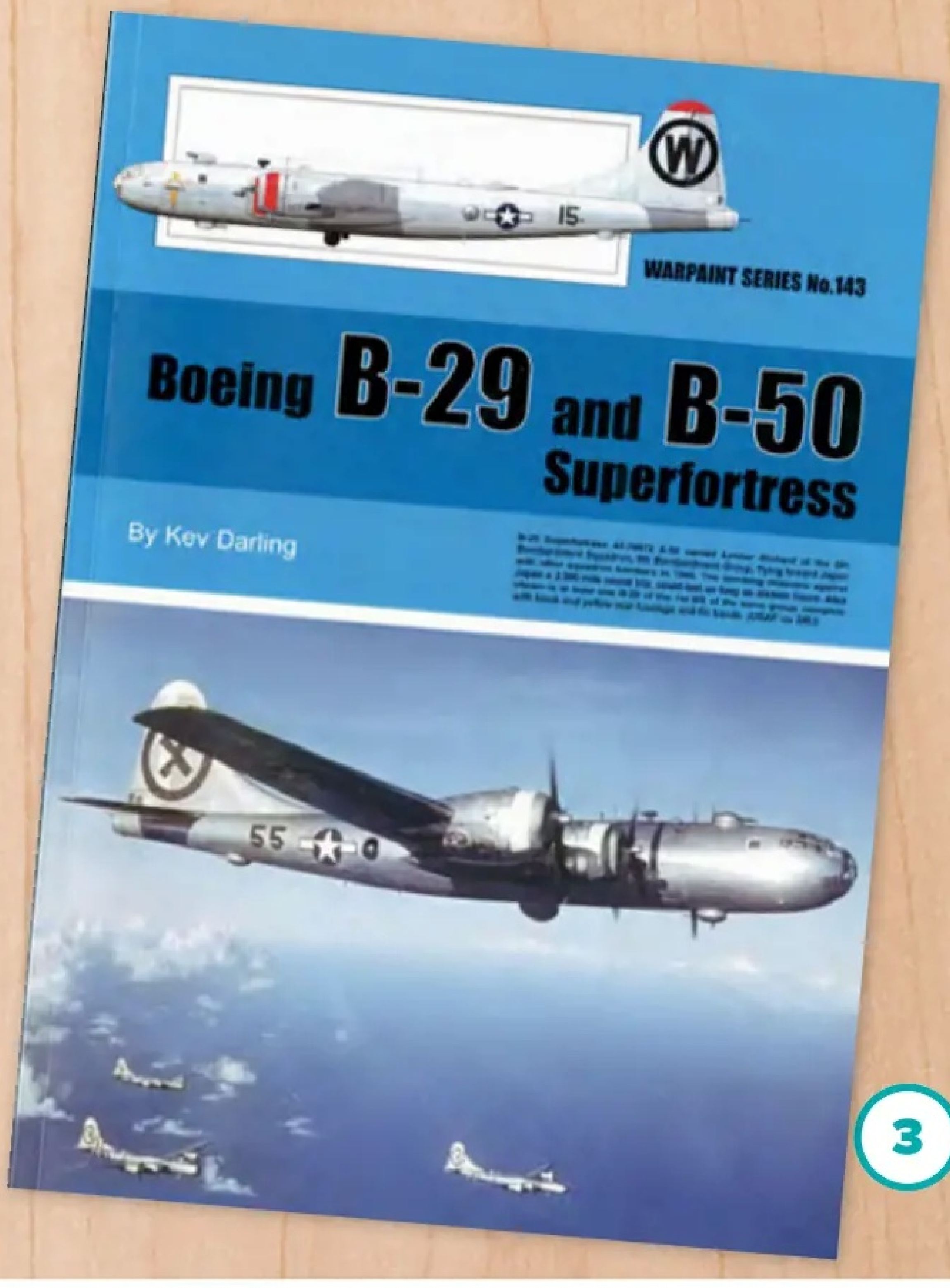
▲ A slightly smaller needle was required for more precise weathering, such as applying the lighter Olive Drab shades to panel centres, and for this an Iwata Revolution BR – fitted with a 0.3mm needle and nozzle – was utilised.

The FIGHTING COLOURS of
Richard J. Caruana
50th Anniversary Collection
738
5: Hawker Hunter in British Service

1

LEGENDS OF WARFARE
AVIATION
F-4 Phantom II
McDonnell Douglas MiG Hunter
NE
8378
NAVY
DAVID DOYLE

2



3

1

The Fighting Colours of Richard J Caruana 50th Anniversary Collection 5: Hawker Hunter in British Service

By: Richard J Caruana
ISBN: 978-83-67227-92-6 **Price:** £15
Pages: 54 **Format:** 212 x 299mm
Web: www.wydawnictwostratus.pl/en/

Maltese aviation illustrator Richard J Caruana has made a huge contribution to modellers understanding and appreciating aircraft colour schemes. His recent *Fighting Colours* series of softback books continues to inspire legions of kit-builders; the latest instalment offers artwork of the delightful Hawker Hunter. This 50th Anniversary Collection under the MMP imprint follows the type in British service, offering colour profiles, several plan views, unit badge illustrations and black-and-white line drawings. More than 100 profiles of RAF Hunters fill most of the pages, but you can also enjoy 12 renderings of Fleet Air Arm machines. Two-seaters are included, plus airframes flown by the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Empire Test Pilots' School and Aeroplane & Armament Experimental Establishment. Preceding the artwork are five pages of history and period photos. The bulk of the artworks are operational RAF fighters, but there are machines from flying training schools and aerobatic teams. Pleasingly, just three profiles feature on each landscape page, ensuring they reach a decent size. Standout inclusions are the Operation Musketeer Suez Crisis F.5s of 1 and 34 Squadrons, each with identification stripes on the wings and fuselage. If you like jet fighters and want a subject that offers varied markings and colour schemes, the Hunter is a real winner and exemplified in style throughout this magnificent book. **CC**

2

F-4 Phantom II McDonnell Douglas MiG Hunter

By: David Doyle
ISBN: 978-0-7643-6902-5 **Price:** £22.99
Pages: 128 **Format:** 237 x 237mm
Web: www.gazellebookservices.co.uk

Wildly successful throughout its career, still in service and a popular subject for modellers, the F-4 has been examined previously by many reference books. Schiffer's latest *Legends of Warfare Aviation* provides heaps of photos – however, many of these have almost certainly not appeared in print before. Rare colour schemes are shown, offering modellers different décor to consider on their builds. Fine examples include the red-tailed, UH-coded F4H-1F of the US Navy's Composite Squadron 7 (VC-7). Each chapter describes a different variant, the early focus exploring US Navy and Marine Corps airframes (F-4H-1/F-4A, F-4B,F-4J, F-4N, F-4S and RF-4B). Later focus falls on the USAF F-4C/D/E, RF-4C and anti-radar F-4G Wild Weasel. Sadly, just two pages are devoted to British F-4K/M airframes, and there's no coverage of other export versions. Relatively brief blocks of text start each chapter, as the thrust of the book is unashamedly photographic. A handful of black-and-white images provide detail of the YRF-4C cockpit, an F-4E specifications panel is present, plus a page of black-and-white weapons drawings; these are highly useful for appreciating the subtleties of AIM-9 Sidewinder and laser-guided bomb variants. Schiffer's book is a pleasant surprise, given the sheer weight of Phantom material published over the years. The large number of photos – almost exclusively from the National Museum of Naval Aviation and National Museum of the United States Air Force – are revealing, providing considerable inspiration for any Phantom enthusiast. **CC**

3

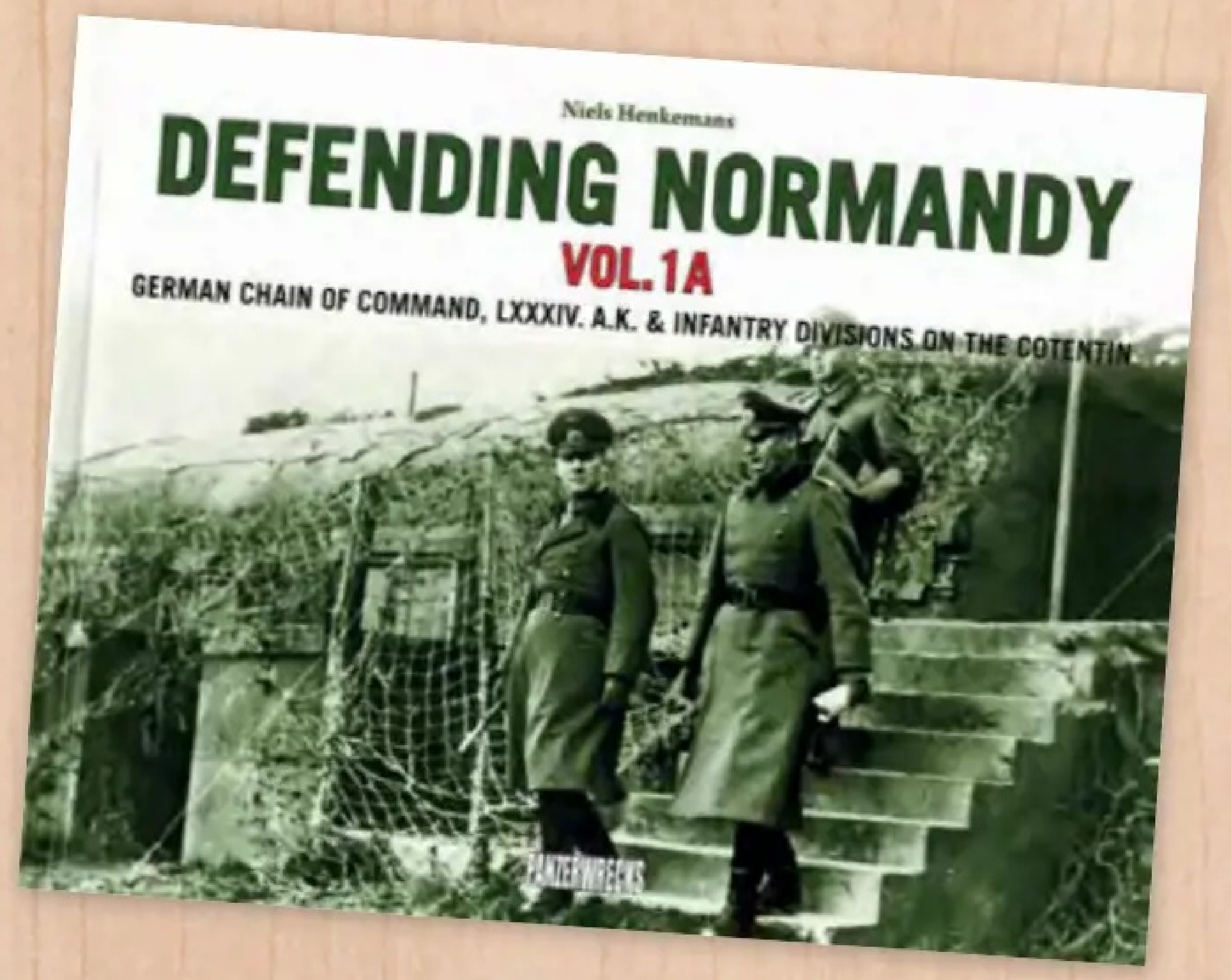
Boeing B-29 and B-50 Superfortress

By: Kev Darling
ISBN: 978-1-916759-17-6 **Price:** £25
Pages: 120 **Format:** A4
Web: www.guidelinepublications.co.uk

Boeing's B-29 Superfortress is a classic World War Two design, and its shape – either in its original form or its B-50 derivative – is immediately recognisable. The author traces the types' history, from conception through its development; this is followed by brief descriptions of B-29 variants, which segue neatly into a technical description. The types' operational service is then examined, with an understandable focus on usage during World War Two and the Korean War. Trials and experimental airframes are also covered, with a brief look at RAF-operated Washingtons. The narrative is backed throughout by an impressive collection of photos, predominantly focusing on USAF machines, but also including RAF Washingtons and several Soviet and Chinese airframes. These are joined by 48 colour profiles, although these just cover US and RAF machines, with bombers, tankers and rescue airframes operated by the former featuring heavily. Scale drawings are included, but they have been set to 1/200, meaning modellers will need to enlarge them if they are needed to support a project. In this regard, the recent change to perfect binding on Warpaint volumes (previously they were stapled) has a downside – it's more difficult to place the scale drawings cleanly on a scanner/photocopier to allow them to be enlarged. Additionally, the wider 'gutter' at the centres of a spread means there's less space available for text or photos. That aside, though, this Warpaint is a good introduction to both the B-29 and B-50 Superfortress. **SF**

PANZER CAMOUFLAGE
1
Volume I
WEHRMACHT DIVISIONS CAMOUFLAGE PATTERNS IN WWII

4


Niels Henkemans
DEFENDING NORMANDY
VOL.1A
GERMAN CHAIN OF COMMAND, LXXXIV. A.K. & INFANTRY DIVISIONS ON THE COTENTIN
PANZERWRECKS

5

No.34
RIPPED APART
VOLUME 1: THE CYPRUS CRISIS 1963-64
TOM COOPER, DAVE WATSON & DIMITRIS VASSILOPOULOS
EUROPE@WAR SERIES

6

4

Panzer Camouflage Volume 1: Wehrmacht Divisions Camouflage Patterns in WWII

By: Igor Donchik
ISBN: 427-0-00-314793-4 **Price:** £45
Pages: 124 **Format:** 268 x 214mm
Web: https://not-toys.com/

The desire for colour artwork of German tanks shows no sign of abating, even though photographs are arguably still the best form of reference. There have long been arguments about the accuracy of such artwork, but that said, sometimes there just isn't a definitive photo or document that can confirm a particular colour or detail. However, the hardback Panzer Camouflage Volume I from not-toys.com takes this kind of publishing to new heights. The thick, matt-finish paper stock is replete with splendid colour profiles and front/rear views of various Werhmacht vehicles, from at least 11 units. There's also a 'what-if'-based chapter on the 'German Liberation Army' offering. It's followed by further artworks of road and tactical signs, illustrations of 200-lit barrels, plus tactical symbols employed from 1935-42 and 1943-45. The drawing style is pleasing, there being enough weathering and wear to make the subjects look realistic, without obscuring the detail. Colour chips are supplied for every vehicle rendering, stating the RAL number... although, unsurprisingly, these are simply segmented examples of the colours used on the drawing rather than real paint chips. Many vehicle types are represented, such as the Panther, Tiger I, different Marder versions, Panzer II, III and IV. There are also artworks of the sIG 33-armed Sd.Kfz.138/1 Grille, different Stug.III variants and the Brummbär. With 180 vehicle artworks alone, this is a pleasing book should inspire no end. **CC**

5

Defending Normandy Volume 1A German Chain of Command, LXXXIV. AK & Infantry Divisions on the Cotentin

By: Niels Henkemans
ISBN: 978-1-908032-25-6 **Price:** £39.99
Pages: 272 **Format:** 217 x 280mm
Web: www.panzerwrecks.com

If you're a military modeller who enjoys delving into the history of the subjects you like to replicate, Panzerwrecks' new *Defending Normandy* books could be right up your street. This weighty hardback oozes quality and fastidious research. The goal is to re-examine archive material to enable better detailing on German assets in Normandy. It seems the authors of many previous works on the subject have failed to focus on the particular infantry formations themselves but perpetuating various myths and inaccuracies in the process. In this first volume, Niels Henkemans, describes the German chain of command, as well as LXXXIV. Armee-korps and infantry divisions throughout the Cotentin Peninsula. Replete with more maps than any other visual content, there is select period imagery. Henkemans' text covers assets in Normandy from 1941 to D-Day, various commanders, the organisation and equipment, plus the workings of 7.Armee from D-Day to July 24, 1944. While some photos feature just personnel, others highlight military vehicles, field/rail guns and anti-tank weapons. Another photo provides a revealing study of a battle-damaged street, offering plenty of direction for scenic modellers. Formation diagrams and a chart showing German military symbols are also included. While this volume isn't cheap, it's more than worth its weight considering the huge amount of information provided. **CC**

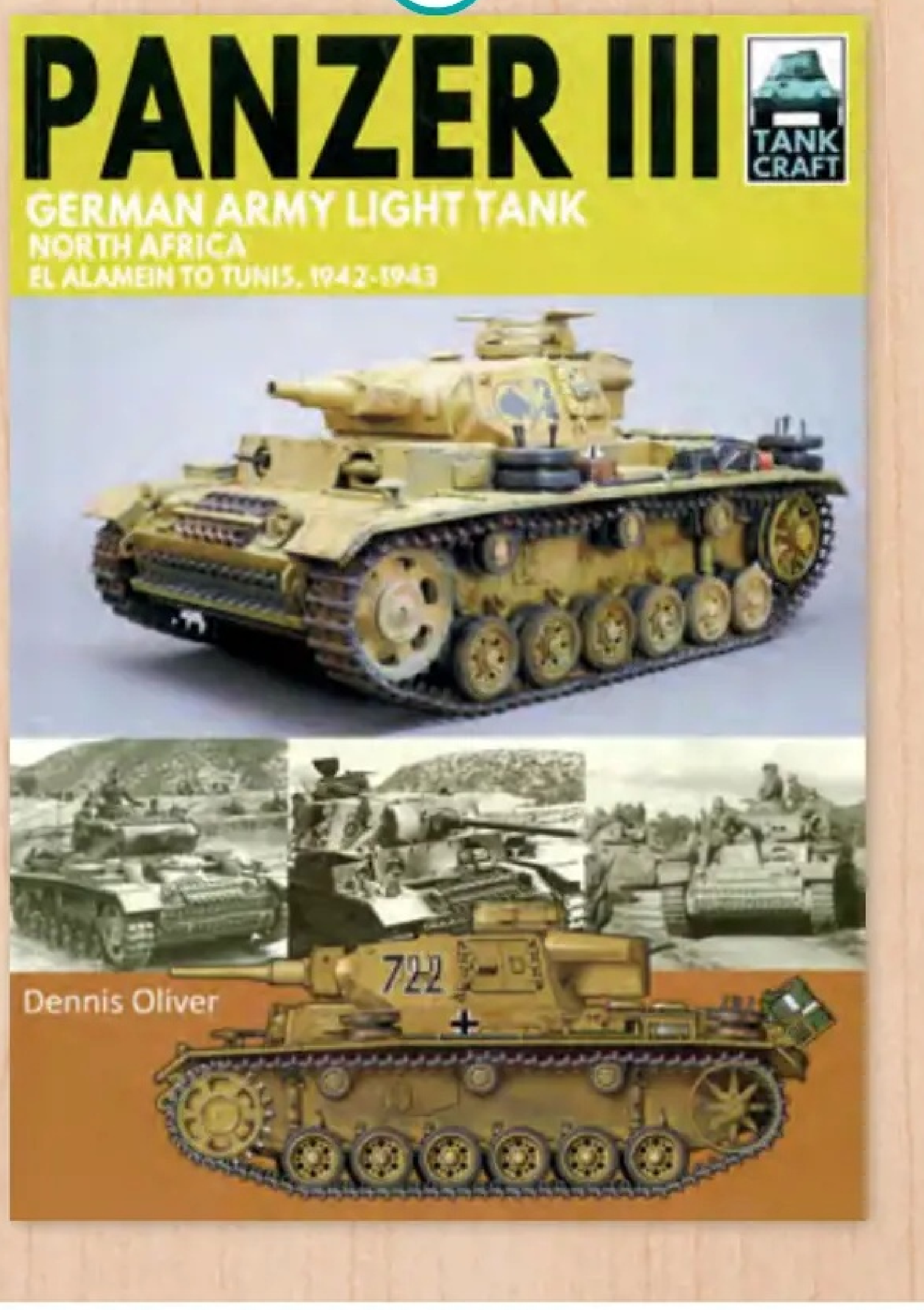
6

Ripped Apart Vol 1: The Cyprus Crisis 1963-64

By: Tom Cooper, Dave Watson and Dimitris Vassilopoulos
ISBN: 978-1-804512-12-8 **Price:** £19.95
Pages: 72 **Format:** A4
Web: www.helion.co.uk

The history of Cyprus and its political and military ramifications is a fascinating subject, and Helion has issued a volume on the events of 1963-64 (often called the 'First Cyprus Crisis') that leads directly into the Turkish invasion of 1974 (which will be covered in a separate volume). With just 72 pages, the authors have had to condense a substantial amount of information into a rather compact volume, and it's to their credit they have achieved it with aplomb. There's a concise, yet highly readable explanation of the island's history and that of the political developments both there and on the mainland shores of both Greece and Turkey. The roots of the conflict are given special attention, along with the corresponding build-ups of military materiel on both sides (mainland and Cypriot). Military equipment from both sides is then described in detail – accompanied by a splendid selection of full-colour profiles – after which the authors chart the geography and history of Cyprus itself, culminating in how the armed militias on the Greek and Turkish Cypriot sides came into being. There's also a brief description of the foreign bases present on the island during the 1960s, before the reader is immersed in the events of 1963-64. All aspects are covered, from the Turkish air strikes on Greek Cypriot positions, and reconnaissance flights intercepted by RAF Lightnings, to the eventual calming of the situation. If you're interested in the modern history of Cyprus, this is the ideal starting point. **SF**

8



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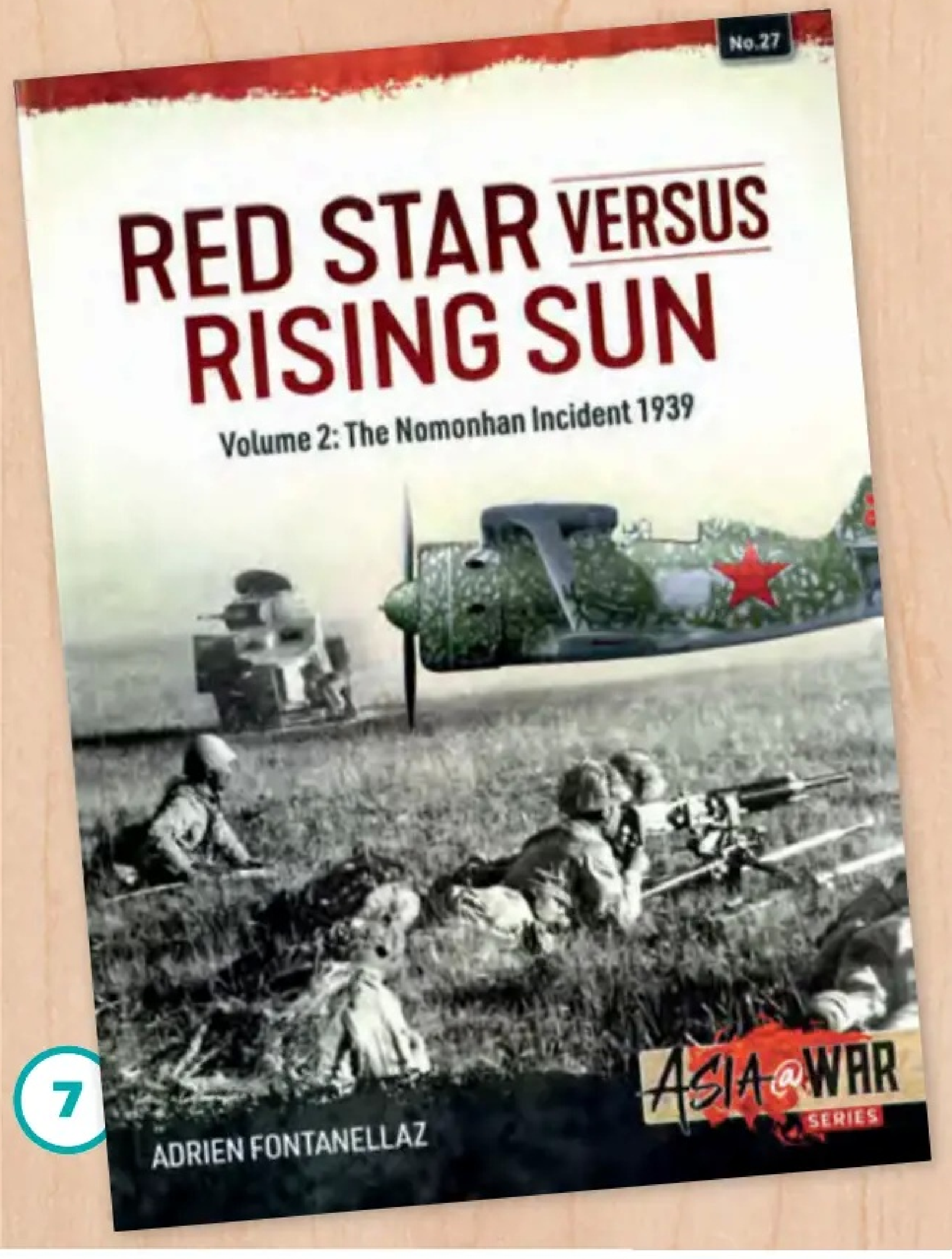
No.27
RED STAR VERSUS RISING SUN
Volume 2: The Nomonhan Incident 1939
ADRIEN FONTANELLAZ
ASIA@WAR SERIES

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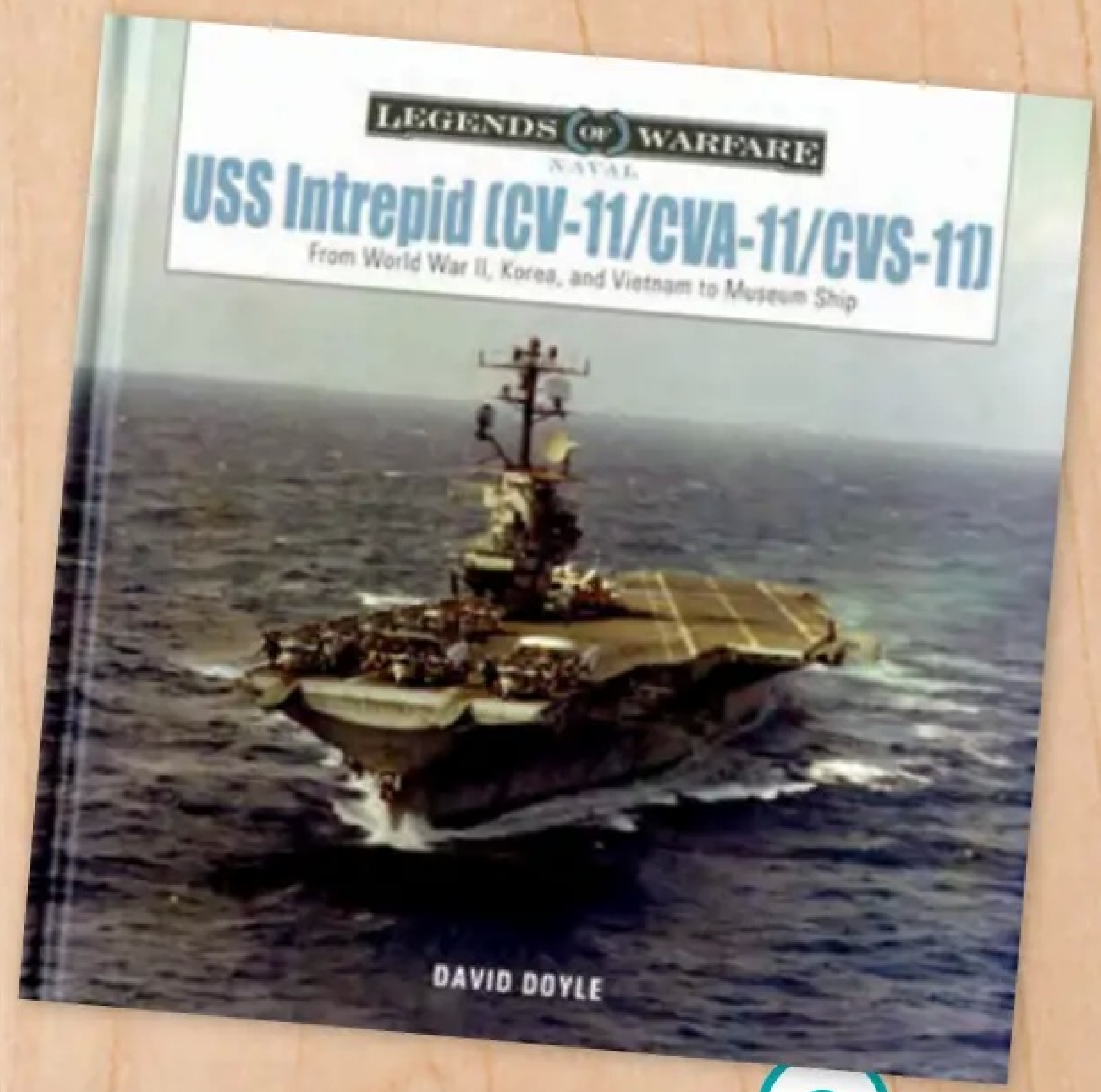
LEGENDS OF WARFARE
NAVAL
USS Intrepid (CV-11/CVA-11/CVS-11)
From World War II, Korea, and Vietnam to Museum Ship
DAVID DOYLE

7

Red Star versus Rising Sun Volume 2

By: Adrien Fontanellaz
ISBN: 978-1-911628-66-8 **Price:** £19.95
Pages: 72 **Format:** A4
Web: www.helion.co.uk

There are many 'forgotten' battles associated with World War Two, yet several had a huge impact on how events would proceed in western Europe. Events in Manchuria during 1939, when a Japanese incursion resulted in a major Soviet counter-offensive that would enable the latter to secure its eastern provinces against subsequent Japanese attack, allowing Stalin to focus on events in the west of the country. It's also worth noting that these battles took place in what is now part of northern China, areas then occupied by the Soviet Union and Japan. The author wastes no time in setting the scene in Manchuria, and it's striking – given how well known the Japanese are for orthodoxy and obedience to superiors – to hear how the incident grew out of a particularly Japanese form of insubordination. There's a detailed explanation of the political and military aspects that led to the confrontation, with subsequent events presented in a balanced manner, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses on both sides. The usual collection of colour profiles depicting vehicles and aircraft employed by both sides is joined by a spread that shows what regular Soviet and Imperial Japanese soldiers and aircrew wore, along with a short profile of the Soviet commander Georgy Zhukov. Perhaps understandably, there are fewer photos than usual, but those that are included are generally good, highlighting both the equipment and the conditions in Manchuria during 1939. If you're interested in the history of eastern Asia, this is well worth considering. **SF**

8

Tank Craft 40 Panzer III

By: Dennis Oliver
ISBN: 978-1-39906-512-2 **Price:** £18.99
Pages: 64 **Format:** A4
Web: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

If you're looking for a starter reference on armoured vehicles such as the Panzer III, especially from a modelling perspective, then Pen & Sword's *Tank Craft* series is a good place to begin. This particular volume focuses on those Panzer III variants used in North Africa between 1942 and 1943, which limits its scope but does allow for a more in-depth analysis of operations with the Afrika Korps' area of activity. If you're not familiar with this book series, the development and history sections bookend several modelling-related chapters, which does create sudden breaks in the narrative flow if you're not expecting them. That aside, the text is well written, being supplemented by a varied selection of period photos (which have informative captions, including variant and unit details) that also provide plenty of inspiration for diorama builders. Ten pages of colour profiles provide in-depth information on specific vehicles, which should also be a boon for modellers. Four completed builds are featured in the gallery section, but it's a shame that they are all 1/35 scale and either Tamiya or Dragon kits. There are similar omissions in the kit and aftermarket listings, omitting the likes of Rubicon, Takom and SS Model, although Das Werk's absence may have been down to when the volume went to print. The final chapter is possibly one of the most useful to modellers, as it highlights the differences between Panzer III variants using a combination of numbered diagrams and close-up photos. **SF**

9

USS *Intrepid* (CV-11/CVA-11/CVS-11)

By: David Doyle
ISBN: 978-0-7643-6357-3 **Price:** £22.99
Pages: 144 **Format:** 237 x 237mm
Web: www.gazellebookservices.co.uk

The Essex class of aircraft carriers is arguably one of the most successful designs ever built, with vessels commissioned during World War Two (albeit in modified form) still in frontline service with the US Navy into the 1970s. As such, they received several classifications, from the initial carrier (CV), through attack carrier (CVA) and finally anti-submarine warfare carrier (CVS). In typical *Legends of Warfare* style, the book comprises a brief introductory section in each chapter leading into a predominantly photographic documentation of USS *Intrepid*, which earned the nickname 'The Fighting I'. The narrative and photos are split into four distinct time periods, which correspond to the changes in her classification and, finally, her ongoing existence as a museum ship moored in New York City. All aspects of carrier operations are covered in depth, including accidents and battle damage. Almost 70 pages are set aside for her service during World War Two; there's then the first of two major refits before she was engaged in the Korean War and used as a recovery ship for the Gemini and Mercury space programmes. The vessel's role in Vietnam then features, followed by decommissioning and transformation into a museum ship. *Intrepid* is well served in scale form, with kits in 1/350, 1/700, 1/720 and even 1/1200 from the likes of Trumpeter, Revell and Lindberg, although just those by Trumpeter are modern toolings. Regardless of which kit you have, this book is a treasure trove of information and comes recommended. **SF**

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Bell AH-1S
COBRA CHOPPER
'J.G.S.D.F.'
1:72 SCALE KIT
Hasegawa

1

Reggiane Re.2002 Ariete
No 1472
1:72
ITALERI

2

eduard
ProfiPACK
Albatros D.III
scale 1/48

3

①

Bell AH-1S Cobra Chopper 'JGSDF'

By: Hasegawa **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 00534 **Price:** £19.99
Web: www.amerang.co.uk

Japanese firm Hasegawa's reintroduction of a 'core' range of kits now includes a re-issued 1/72 Japan Ground Self-Defense Force AH-1S Cobra with an impressive shark mouth. This airframe tallies with the US Army AH-1F format, but is designated AH-1S in JGSDF service. Usefully, generic serial number runs are provided so you can build other airframes in the fleet, besides the option shown on the instructions. Hasegawa's Cobra is a well-moulded item, featuring fine engraving and delicate, raised rivets. However, the cockpit is lacking slightly, due to overly basic seats, and relies on decals for the instrument panels and side consoles. Foot pedals for tail-rotor pitch are provided, but again, are rather clunky, although you do receive a sighting scope for the gunner and a pilot's head-up display (clear part). Outside the cockpit, though, there's plenty to satisfy. Hasegawa provides the exhaust in halves, with a detailed backing plate, while the well-detailed main rotor unit sits atop a deftly moulded separate pitch-change tube arrangement. Weapons-wise, you're provided with quadruple TOW missile launchers and a pair of 19-shot rocket pods. Hasegawa's decal sheet is well printed and the shark mouths are particularly good, although the carrier film is satin rather than gloss, so you'll need to apply the decals to a decently shiny varnish coat to avoid silvering. There are multiple identifier numbers/letters to denote different Japanese anti-tank and training units, but the airframe shown via greyscale four-view drawings on the instructions is:

- JG-3476, Air Training School, Kasumigaura Training Ground

②

Albatros D.III

By: Eduard **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: 8114 **Price:** £13.45
Web: www.eduard.com

Eduard's re-released 1/48 ProfiPACK Albatros D.III biplane offers fresh decals, photo-etched (PE) metal details and paint masks. The styrene alone provides an ideal entry point into the genre, with the plain and pre-coloured PE components adding refinement. Representation of taut fabric over ribs is subtle, while trailing edges are relatively sharp, but the mainwheels are slightly too small and skinny. There's also replication of the various circular inspection covers in styrene (with PE alternatives) plus the twin bracket that runs between the forward-most undercarriage struts (styrene). Cockpit features include a firewall, floor, seat and twin-handled control column. Alternative wing radiator positions are included (on different upper wing parts) along with optional vertical stabiliser/rudder combinations. However, the kit lacks the plates on the inside faces of each wing, to which the interplane struts should attach. Engine moulding might be considered slightly basic nowadays, but once assembled and painted, it will look convincing. There are six schemes:

- Oblt Rudolf Berthold, Jasta 18, Harelbeke, Belgium, September 1917
- D.2006/16, Lt Lothar and Rittmeister Manfred von Richtofen, Jasta 11, La Brayelle, France, March-May 1917
- D.2049/16, Oblt Hermann Göring, CO Jasta 27, Ghitelels, Belgium, May 1917
- Lt Emil Schafer, CO Jasta 28, Wasquehal, France, May 1917
- D.1996/16, Lt Hans-Georg Edward Lübbert, Jasta 11, La Brayelle, France, March 1917
- Lt Franz Ray, Jaata 28, Varsenare, Belgium, autumn 1917

③

Reggiane Re.2002 Ariete

By: Italy **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 1472 **Price:** £19.99
Web: www.hobbyco.net

The 1970s' 1/72 tooling of the Reggiane Re.2002 Ariete, by Supermodel, has been reworked by Italeri and has new decals. The revamped fuselage halves represent a Series II airframe, sporting fine engraved panel lines, plus raised and recessed rivets. Oddly, though, the original empennage is retained, with raised panel lines and deep joins between stabilisers and rudder/elevators. Reasonably good cockpit detail is moulded in situ on the inner faces of the fuselage halves. Meanwhile, the new wings are splendid, having the same standard of engraving as the fuselage, although the trailing edge of the one-piece lower wing is slightly thick. Other freshly moulded pieces, though, include wing pitot tubes, an upper fuselage insert, the engine cowling ring and – almost certainly – the Piaggio radial engine. In the cockpit, there's more than enough to satisfy the average modeller. The instrument panel has combined rudder pedals, although these are moulded in line, which prevents depth. Other new parts are the wheels, which feature flat spots to denote weight, plus well-detailed separate hubs. Separate windscreen and canopy parts are provided and the clarity is passable at best. Markings-wise, Italeri's Cartograf-printed decal sheet is superb. The options are:

- 4/238, 238ª Squadriglia, 101 Gruppo Tuffatori, 5° Stormo, Manduria airfield (TA), Italy, September 1943
- MM.7309, Reggiane workshop, Reggio dell'Emilia, spring 1943
- 238ª Squadriglia, 102° Gruppo Tuffatori, 5° Stormo, Palata airfield (CB), Italy, 1944
- Black 2/BN+YB, Geschwader 'Bongart', Luftwaffe, Vercors area, France, 1944

50 Years
43+97
TORNADO IDS 'MAIDEN FLIGHT 50th ANNIVERSARY'
LIMITED EDITION

④

Macchi MC.205 Veltro
№ 2519
1:32
ITALERI

⑤

Revell
1:144
63 PARTS
19,6 cm
18,2 cm
BAe 146-200 AirUK

⑥

④

Tornado IDS 'Maiden Flight 50th Anniversary'

By: Hasegawa **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 02479 **Price:** £49.99
Web: www.amerang.co.uk

Panavia's Tornado reached its 50th anniversary last year. To mark the occasion, Hasegawa has re-released its 1/72 IDS kit with German celebratory markings. This kit was first issued in 1989 and needs little introduction, and was the best iteration of the type before Revell issued its own version. It has been re-released almost 30 times since its debut. This limited-edition boxing marries the standard styrene parts with a brand-new decal sheet that features the Tornado 50th anniversary scheme as applied to the German airframe 43+97, operated by Luftwaffe test unit Wehrtechnische Dienstelle 61. Parts are presented on seven styrene runners, including a single clear frame for the glazing, being unchanged from the original Marineflieger release in 1989. This means there are two runners carrying a pair of Kormoran anti-ship missiles and their pylon adapters, plus two Cerberus II electronic countermeasures (ECM) pods (although there are no reference photos of this airframe carrying the latter store). More experienced modellers could also convert the Cerberus II to a later Tornado Self Protection Jammer ECM pod. Hasegawa's Tornado, given the right amount of 'TLC' and corrective work (the nose will need replacing – a common error on Tornado kits), can still be built into a fine replica. It does benefit from the company's trademark super-fine panel-line/rivet engraving, while two of the smaller 1,500 lit fuel tanks are also supplied. The new decals are well printed and have rich colour tones, but the carrier film veers toward a satin finish, so you'll need to apply a good gloss clear coat before decal application.

⑤

Macchi C.205 Veltro

By: Italeri **Scale:** 1/32
Item no: 2519 **Price:** £109.99
Web: www.hobbyco.net

Having already released its 1/32 Macchi C.202 Folgore two years ago, Italeri has now issued its successor, the C.205 Veltro. Much of the airframe remained the same, save for the front end, which featured changed engine panels to accommodate the new powerplant. Italeri has chosen to depict the Series III/IV airframes; parts are presented on five styrene runners plus a hefty photo-etched brass fret. These are accompanied by lengths of vinyl tubing and fine wire, canopy/wheel masks and 3D-printed instrument panel decals. There's an entire engine and bearers, nose machine guns, separate flaps and flying control surfaces, plus a refined cockpit. The airframes are:

- MM 92166/Red 2, 378ª Squadriglia, 155° Gruppo Autonomo, 51° Stormo, Regia Aeronautica (RA), Capoterra, Sardinia, July 1943
- MM 92186/White 3, 85ª Squadriglia, 8° Gruppo, 3° Stormo, RA, Cerveteri, Rome, Italy, July 1943
- MM 92178/White 2, 97ª Squadriglia, 9° Gruppo, 4° Stormo, Co-Belligerent Air Force (CAF), Brindisi, Italy, 1943
- MM 92163/White 1, 155° Gruppo, 51° Stormo, CAF, Leverano Airfield, February 1944
- MM 98287/Red 18, 1ª Squadriglia, 1° Gruppo Caccia, Aeronautica Nazionale Repubblicana, (ANR) Reggio Emilia, Italy, April 1944
- MM 92242, 2ª Squadriglia 'Guido Bobba', 1° Gruppo Caccia, ANR, Campoformido, Italy, March 1943
- MM 92264/Blue 3, 3ª Squadriglia 'Dante Ocarso', 1° Gruppo Caccia, ANR, Reggio Emilia, March 1944
- MM 98219-98224?/Blue 5, 3ª Squadriglia 'Dante Ocarso', 1° Gruppo Caccia, ANR, Reggio Emilia, March 1944

⑥

BAe 146-200 Air UK

By: Revell **Scale:** 1/144
Item no: 03791 **Price:** £22.99
Web: Revell stockists

Despite first being tooled in the late 1990s, Revell's BAe 146-200 regional airliner kit may surprise in terms of quality. It now comes with a decal sheet carrying markings for six Air UK airframes. Parts comprise three styrene runners, all moulded in white, plus a clear frame carrying the windscreen. While window apertures are on each fuselage half, no glazing is supplied, so you'll have to back the windows with plastic card, fill the windows and sand smooth accordingly… then apply the window decals on Revell's sheet. Note that while a styrene windscreen is supplied, you also get solid grey pane decals, or a windscreen frame decal with clear panes. Panel-line engraving is admirably fine and so are the antennas moulded in situ. Flap actuators on the lower wing halves also look to scale. Revell's delicate engraving is particularly evident on the one-piece upper wing, which benefits from tiny rivets and deftly moulded spoiler hinge points. Although no cockpit detail is present, the undercarriage bays have delicate rendering of hydraulic pipework, and the legs themselves are excellent. The engine housings and pylons are well shaped and Revell ensures a forward rake to the housing fronts. There is also engine fan-blade detail, plus neatly moulded exhaust cones. Smaller, separately moulded parts include antennas, flap fairings, and nose undercarriage leg torque scissors. Decal register is good and the door surrounds are pleasing too. However, the decals provided to emulate the metallic portions of the wings and empennage are, in fact, pale grey… so more fastidious modellers may wish to paint these areas instead.

MARK I. models
1:144 SCALE
2in1
INJECTION-MOULDED MODEL KIT
CURTISS H-75/MOHAWK IV
ALLIED PILOTS
MKM144144

7

eduard
ProfiPACK edition
Spitfire Mk.IXe
scale 1/48

9

8

IBG MODELS
PZL P.11c Polish Fighter "Rare Birds"
1:72
72520

7

Curtiss H-75/Mohawk IV 'Allied Pilots'

By: Mark I Models **Scale:** 11/144
Item no: MKM144144 **Price:** €17.14
Web: www.eshop.miniwing.cz

Mark I Models' dual re-release of its Curtiss H-75 Hawk parts includes fresh markings for H-75A-3 and British/Commonwealth Mohawk Mk.IV machines. This is a typical limited-run kit, without locating holes/pins; horizontal stabilisers simply butt-join to raised root sections. There's a cockpit floor, control column, and combined seat and rear bulkhead part. An instrument panel with integrally moulded rudder pedals is present too, and this receives a decal for dial detail. Both engine types are provided (R-1830 and 1820), the former comprising two parts while the latter has just one. The wing part features two gun barrels on each side, but these should be removed for one of the schemes. Panel-line engraving is admirable and there's even a scalloped surface on the ailerons and rudder to denote taught fabric. Also impressive are the main undercarriage legs, moulded as single pieces with just the front doors employed as separate items. Mark I's decals are splendid, featuring relatively thin, gloss carrier film and good colour tones:

- H-75A-3, No 230/White 0, Sgt Marcel Milan, Free French AF, Bangui, Ubangi-Shari, French Equatorial Africa, May 1941
- H-75A-3, No 329, S/Lt Lubomir Úlehla, Pilot's School, Free French AF, Kasbah-Tadla, Morocco, North Africa, 1944-45
- Mohawk Mk.IV, 2537, 3 Sqn SAAF, Alamata, Ethiopia, Africa, summer 1941
- Mohawk Mk.IV, BB928/Z *Cymru am Byth*, Sqn Ldr Charles Jeffries, OC 155 Sqn, Agartala, India, January 1943

8

PZL P.11c Polish Fighter 'Rare Birds'

By: IBG Models **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 72520 **Price:** €13
Web: www.ibg.com.pl

IBG has reissued its magnificent PZL P.11c with new markings to depict three airframes that received either experimental camouflage or (very) short-lived skis for use on snow. The basic parts are unchanged from the original 2021 release, being presented on 13 styrene runners and a photo-etched (PE) brass fret. These are joined by two fresh pieces for the mainwheel skids, which replace the wheels on two of the markings options. The moulding is outstanding; IBG has a well-earned reputation for its quality, with features such as the fine ribbing on the wings and similar raised detail on the delicately rendered cockpit floor. The engine has well-defined cooling vanes on each cylinder; the use of PE for support struts raises the detail level considerably. Clear guidance is provided on airframe differences, along with the option for underwing bombs and skis instead of wheels. Modellers also have a choice between a standard styrene windscreen and an acetate sheet glazing/PE frame combo; the latter is more scale accurate, but may be fiddly to construct. Full national markings and airframe stencilling is supplied on the beautifully printed decal sheet, along with generic numerals for those wanting to replicate different airframes. The three options are:

- Nr 8.138/White 3/62-W, Pursuit Bde, September 1939
- Nr 8.84/White 6/47-L, 152nd Ftr Flt, III/5 Ftr Sqn, winter 1938-39
- (Notional) Nr 8.147/White 13/013/L, 151st Ftr Flt, Eastern Poland, 1940

9

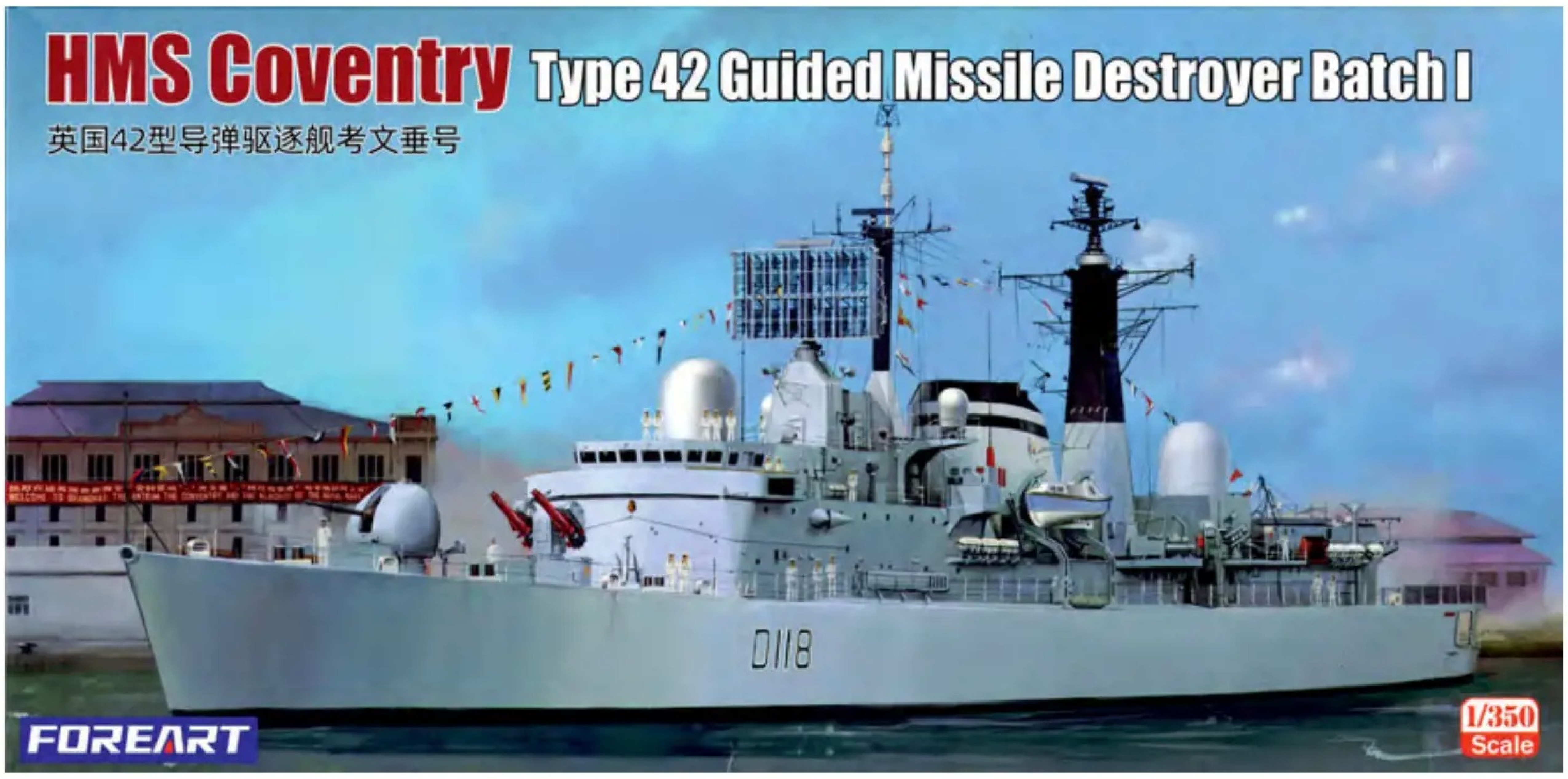
Spitfire Mk.IXe

By: Eduard **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: 8288 **Price:** £22.70
Web: www.eduard.com

Eduard's splendid 1/48 Spitfire Mk.IXe makes returns with new markings for aircraft flown by notable aviators; several options depict aircraft at different times in their service life. At first glance the parts appear identical to previous iterations, although closer examination reveals a new cowling panel on Runner E. There are five frames and, with this being a ProfiPACK offering, these are accompanied by a pre-painted photo-etched (PE) metal fret (supplying items such as the instrument panel and armour panels) and a canopy/wheel mask set. There are choices between all-styrene representations of cockpit/interior components or styrene/PE alternatives. Other options include two rudder styles, open/closed cockpit hatch and canopy, standard/cropped wingtips, two types of wheel hub and different armament. This is currently the best 1/48 Spitfire Mk.IXe available, although its complexity can make assembly fiddly. The schemes are:

- RR201/DB-G *Sweet Sue V*, Flt Lt Richard J Audet/Flt Lt John J Boyle, 411 Sqn, ALG 88.B Heesh, The Netherlands, December 1944
- RR201/DB-R *Sweet Sue V*, Flt Lt John J Boyle, 411 Sqn, ALG 88.B Heesh, The Netherlands, February-April 1945
- PV181/RAB, Wg Cdr Rolf A Berg, 132 Wg, ALG B.79 Woensdrecht, The Netherlands, 1944
- RK889/RY-A, Sqn Ldr Otmar Kučera, 313 Sqn, RAF Manston, UK, May-July 1945
- TE517/RY-A, Sqn Ldr O Kučera, 313 Sqn, RAF Manston, UK, August 1945
- RK917/DB, Gp Capt Douglas Bader, RAF North Weald, UK, September 1945
- 2003 (Ex-TE531) 105 Tajeset, Ramat David, Israel, September 1953

NEW-TOOL 1/350 HMS *COVENTRY* BY FOREART


HMS Coventry Type 42 Guided Missile Destroyer Batch I
英国42型导弹驱逐舰考文垂号
D118
FOREART
1/350 Scale

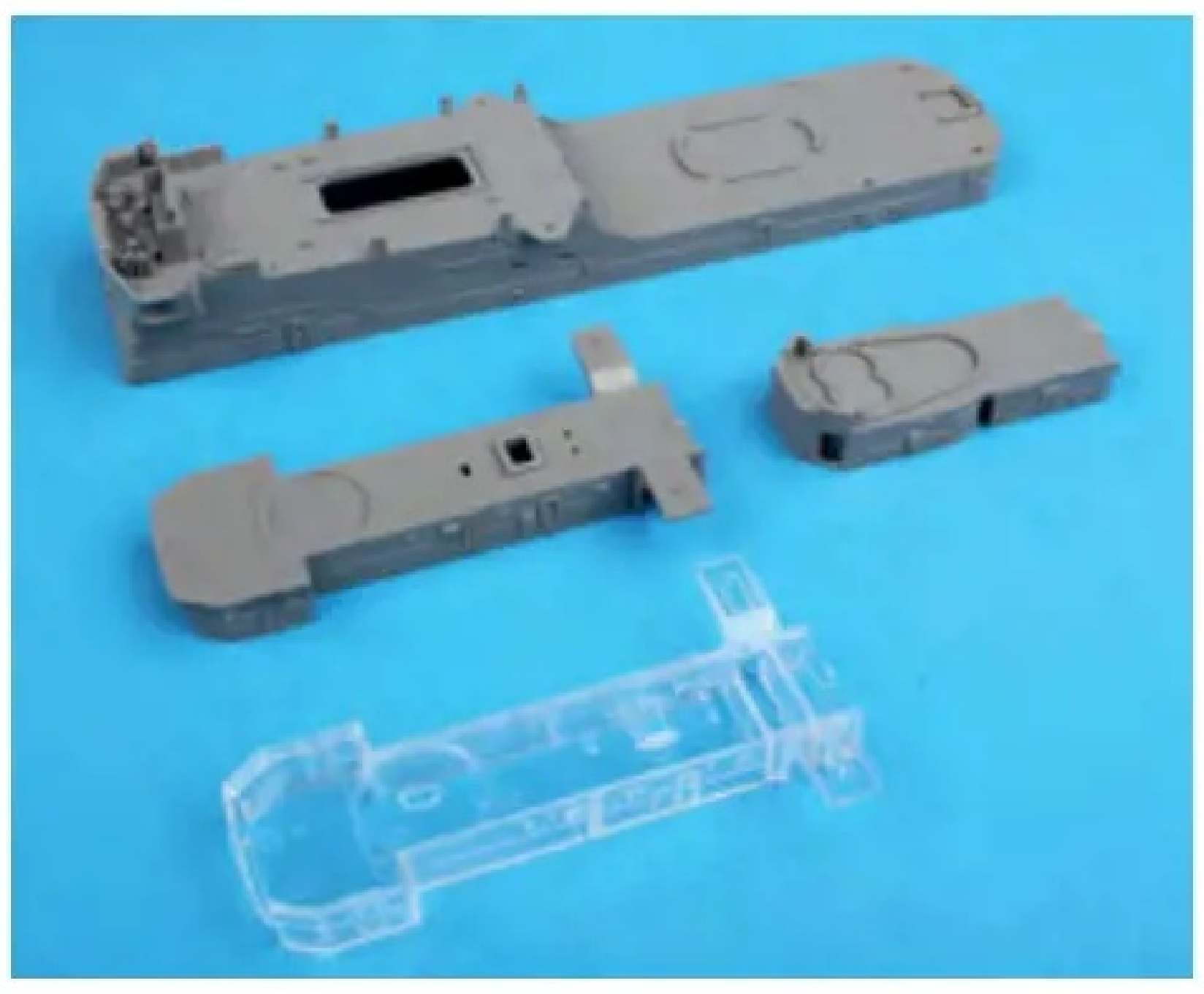
Guided Missile Destroyer | **By:** ForeArt | **Scale:** 1/350 | **Item no:** 3002 | **Price:** £37.99 | **Web:** ForeArt Stockists

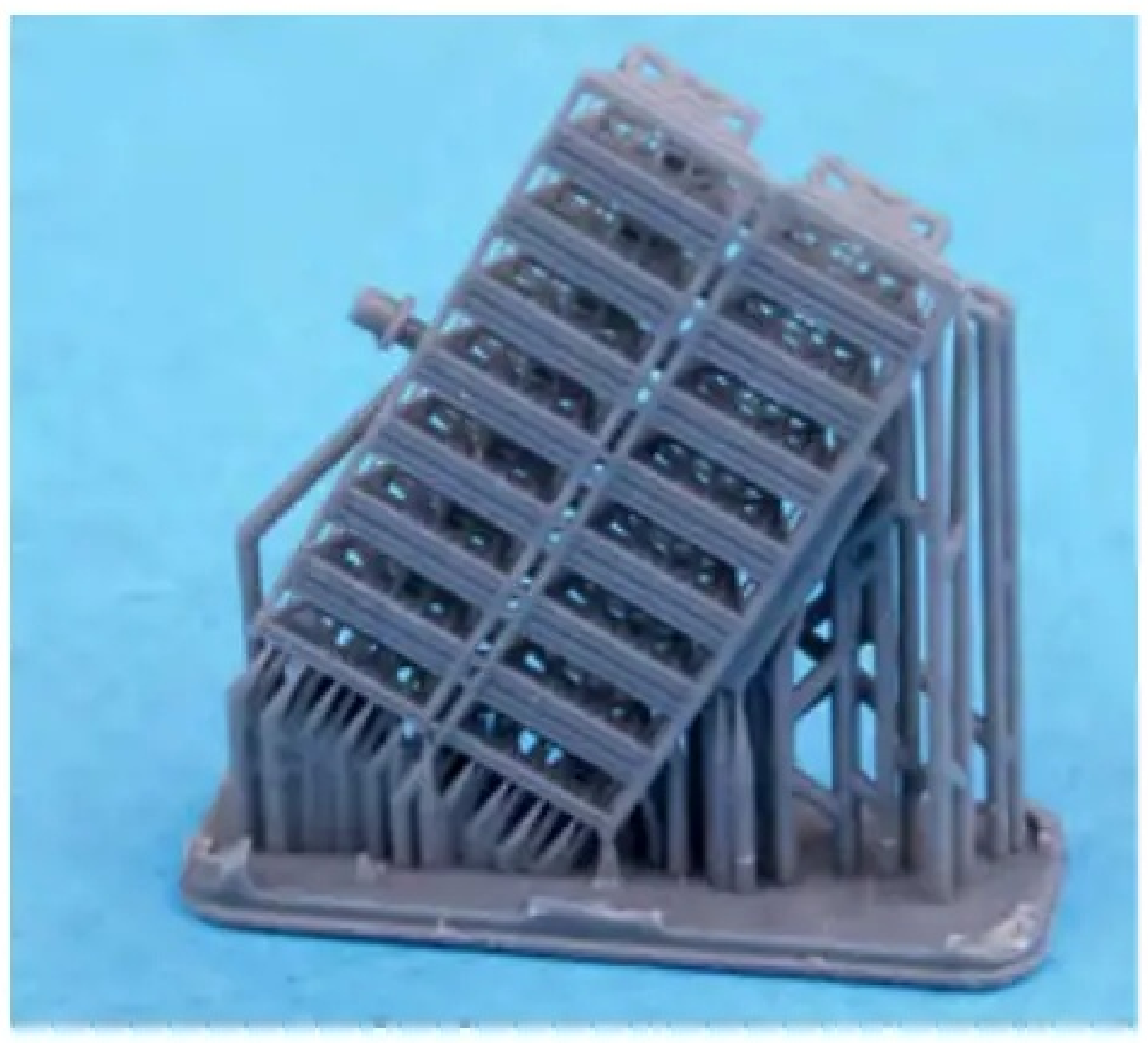
Highly detailed Type 42 Destroyer

Until recently, modellers wanting to build a 1/350 Type 42 destroyer had to rely on Atlantic Models' magnificent multi-media offerings, but now there is ForeArt's new-tool styrene kit.

Initial boxings feature Batch 1 vessels: HMS *Sheffield* (3001) and HMS *Coventry* (3002), with differences confined to the decal sheet and a single runner. Parts are presented on eight styrene runners, plus separate upper/lower hull halves, deck, main superstructure, bridge housing (in grey and clear plastic), funnel base and display stand. These are complemented by two photo-etched (PE) brass frets supplying railings, watertight doors and helicopter deck safety netting. A turned-brass barrel is included for the type's 4.5in main gun, along with an exquisite one-piece 3D-printed Type 965P radar.

Dimensionally, the hull appears to match published measurements, although the beam may be marginally narrow. It can be built as either a full-hull or waterline model, and the moulded detail is crisp, notably on the vertical ladders, 4.5in turret, Lynx helicopter and deck fittings. A styrene Type 965 radar antenna is provided, but its solid nature is rather disappointing, especially as the kit also includes a finer 3D-printed version. Neat touches include a fully detailed aft mooring deck, but the helicopter landing grid is moulded as a raised structure (it should be flush). The choice between a clear or solid bridge structure allows for the integrally moulded bridge fittings to be visible on the former.

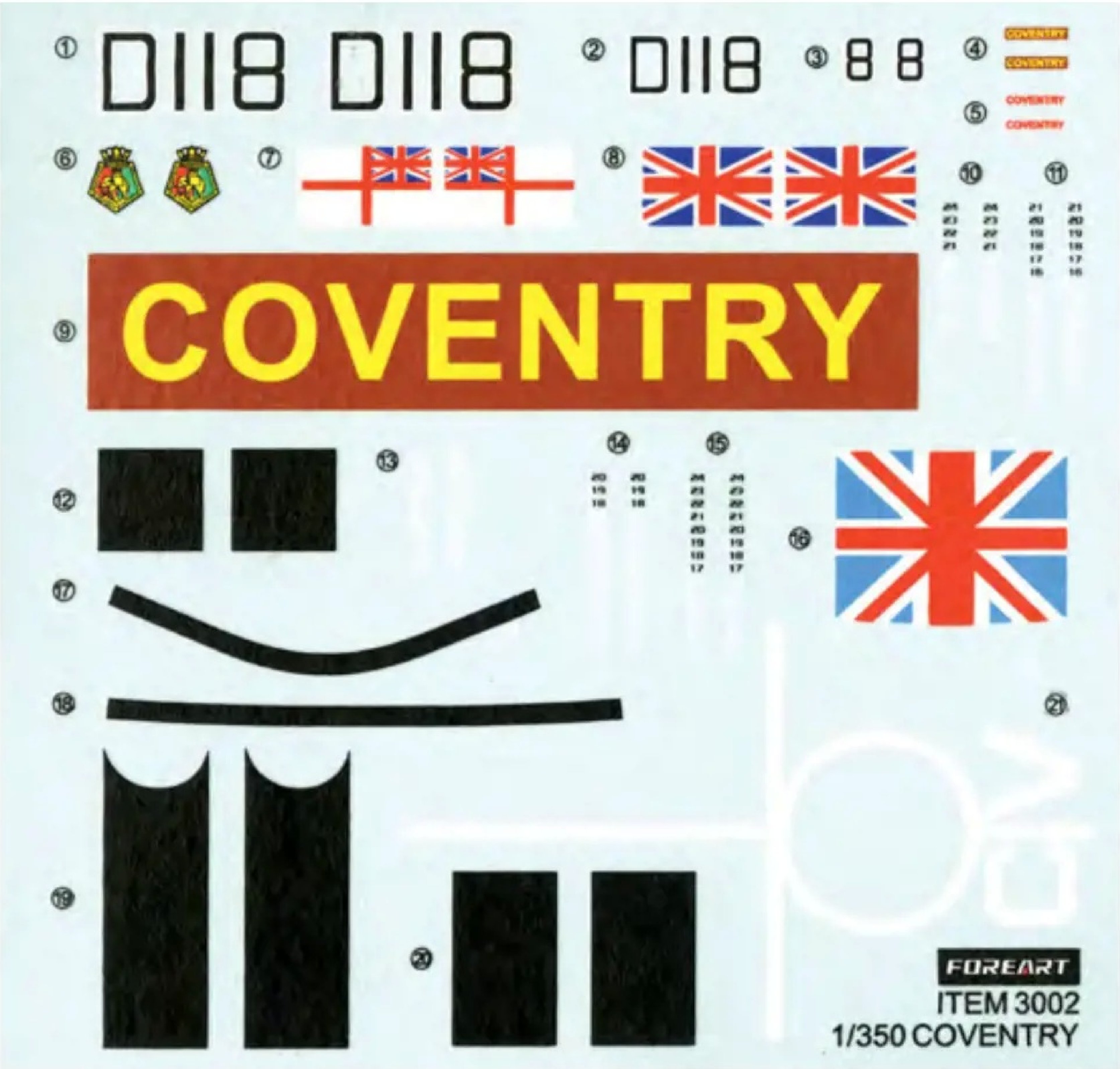

▲ **Superstructure elements are presented as one-piece slide-moulded items, including an optional clear component for the bridge.**

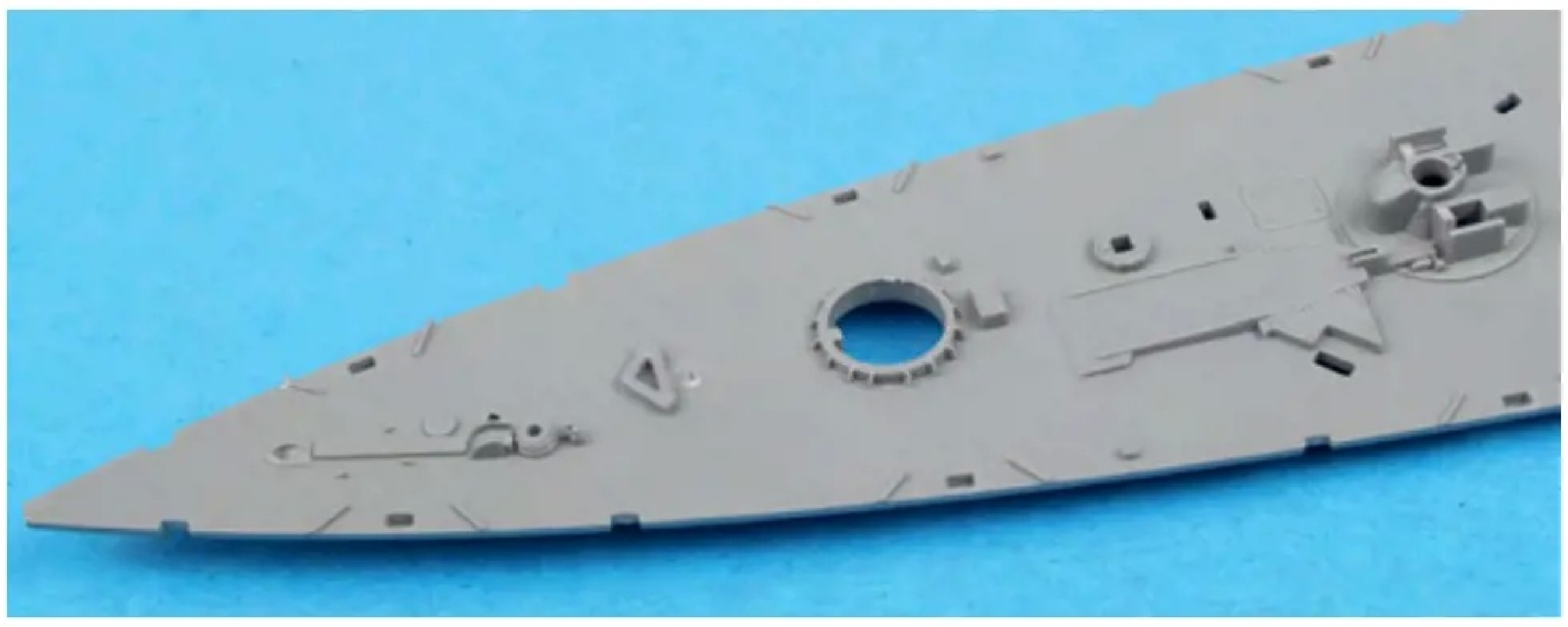

▲ **Modellers have a choice between a two-piece styrene Type 965 radar antenna and a 3D-printed version, although the latter is far superior.**

There are several 'gotchas' though: just three lifeboat canisters are supplied aft of the bridge, (initially there were five on each side), plus two styles of mainmast antennas are provided, yet *Coventry* had just a single configuration throughout its service life, so just use the 'Falklands' parts. There are also several aerial bases included, but no whip-type antennas, so these will need to be scratch-built.

Two markings schemes are supplied, both with a Light Weatherworks Grey upper hull and superstructure. The first appears to represent the ship between November 1978 and March 1980, when it was part of the 8th Frigate Squadron (the numeral '8' is suppklied fo rthe funnel). ForeArt includes a City of Coventry crest as an alternative, but this wasn't present until after its 1980 refit. The second livery depicts *Coventry* during the Falklands conflict, but omissions here include the ship's 4.5in gun turret being repainted in a darker grey, while the SCOT radomes were black, not white, and the black ID stripe should meet the bootline. Both masts were repainted Light Weatherworks Grey, but perhaps the most glaring 'gotcha' is the lower hull colour, which was black, not red.

ForeArt's 1/350 HMS Coventry is available from various retailers and the kit is recommended highly.




▲ **Deck detail is excellent, from the 4.5in gun ring (centre) and anchor chain capstan base (left) to the mounting for the twin-arm Sea Dart launcher (right)**

Sd. Kfz. 234/3
1:35
ITALERI
082
Rubber tyres
Photo-etched fret
Decals sheet for 4 versions
No 6756

①

Sd.Kfz.250/1 NEU
Premium
DRAGON

②

GERMAN 3t CARGO TRUCK 3,6-36S EARLY PROD. PmQ-Type
35445
MiniArt
SCALE 1:35

③

①

Sd.Kfz. 234/3

By: Italeri **Scale:** 1/35
Item no: 6756 **Price:** £34.99
Web: www.hobbyco.net

Italeri's Sd.Kfz. 234 has been around in one form or another since 1980, and this latest iteration mixes the original parts (although one of the three runners has been re-worked) with a new frame that was first introduced in 2015 in a Tamiya boxing, which supplies new jerrycans and tools, plus a photo-etched (PE) brass fret for alternative straps. That said, the moulding belies its age, as there's no flash and the detail is generally crisp, although the engine deck does appear 'soft' in places. Compared to more modern offerings (of which there are now many), the parts breakdown is more simplistic, although the flip side is that this looks far easier (and quicker) to assemble. The styrene parts, which are on four styrene runners, are joined by nine hollow vinyl tyres; these feature generally pleasing tread, although the frame attachment gates and seams will require neatening.

Basic detail is provided for the interior, with both front and rear driver's stations, while the engine bay is hidden behind a bulkhead. Modellers have a choice of styrene or PE straps for the hull-mounted jerrycans, but arguably the kit highlight is the splendid 7.5cm KwK 51 L/24 gun, which features a full breech block and round catcher. The four schemes, which included a vehicle painted with circle camouflage, are:

- Black 082, Pz.Aufkl. Abt. 8, 8 Pz.Div., Czechoslovakia, spring 1945
- Wehrmacht unit, Normandy, July 1944
- Black 053, , Pz.Aufkl. Abt. 20, 20 Pz.Div., Czechoslovakia, May 1945
- 116 Pz.Div, Argentan Normandy, July 1945

②

Sd.Kfz. 250/1 NEU

By: Dragon **Scale:** 1/35
Item no: 6476 **Price:** £59.99
Web: www.hobbyco.net

While an initial glance may lead modellers to think this is just a straight reboxing of Dragon's Sd.Kfz.250/1 NEU, there's been yet another of the firm's subtle re-workings of the parts. New or previously unused components allow for revised crew weapons and equipment, an alternative headlight and different internal stowage. The photo-etched brass fret has also been simplified, providing engine grilles, MG 34 or MG 42 mounting brackets and clasps. There are 18 styrene runners in total, plus a vinyl tarp cover, turned-brass width indicators, separate lower hull and 84 *MagicTrack* links. This kit includes a five-part front wheel arrangement, which improves the appearance considerably. The torsion-bar suspension is well rendered, as is the running gear, while the driver's compartment is suitably busy with transmission, gear levers and even a figure. Modellers have a choice of whether to pose the engine compartment covers open/closed – if the former is selected, then there's a splendid powerplant on view. The rear passenger section is a highlight, from the ammunition locker, tarpaulin, choice of weapons configurations, and the rear hatch can be posed open/closed. Markings are supplied for seven vehicles:

- 3/Pz.Aufkl.Abt., 2.z.Div., France, 1944
- 5.Pz.Div. 'Wiking', Hungary, 1945
- 5.Pz.Div. 'Wiking', Hungary, 1945
- 1.Pz.Div. 'LAH', Kamenets Podolsk, 1944
- Obergruppenführer von Pückler-Berghaus, Orlik-Cimelice, Bohemia, 1945
- Pz.Aufkl.Abt., 1.Pz.Div. 'LAH', 1944
- Unidentified, Eastern Front, 1944

③

German 3t Cargo Truck 3.6-35S Early Prod PmQ-Type

By: MiniArt **Scale:** 1/35
Item no: 35445 **Price:** £52.99
Web: www.creativemodels.co.uk

MiniArt's collection of Opel Blitz-based trucks includes another example of the early production type, which features the original styles of metal cabs and engine covers, with their curved surfaces; these were later abandoned in favour of easier-to-manufacture shapes. This kit comprises 27 styrene runners, including one frame for the glazing and headlight, plus a photo-etched (PE) brass fret. While this could be considered one of MiniArt's simpler kits, there's still a mass of detail, from the superb engine and transmission to the faithful replica of the type's leaf-sprung suspension. Tyres come as two-piece items, separate to the wheel hubs. Options include open/closed windows, doors, bonnet panels, PE or styrene handles, clasps and latches, raised/lowered load bed panels (these are the high type, with seven planks each) and the choice of stowed or raised tilt hoops. Note, though, that there's no provision for a canvas tilt; the load bed is just uncovered. At least one of the six markings options on the decal sheet features graffiti for the vehicle sides and engine panels, which makes a welcome difference to the usual unadorned liveries:

- *Kammi/Katja*, Luftwaffe unit, France, 1940
- Nachtjagdgeschwader 1, Luftwaffe, Germany, summer 1940
- 15. Infanterie-Division, Coastal Defence Sector A1, Netherlands, summer 1942
- 4.Panzer Division, Eastern Front, winter 1941
- 2.Panzer Division, Eastern Front, summer 1943
- Schwere Panzer-Abteilung 503, Normandy, France, summer 1944

M29C Weasel 'Amphibious Version'
PLANET models
MILITARY VEHICLE
MV137
1/72
DETAILNÍ 3D TIŠTĚNÁ STAVEBNICE S LEPTY A OBTISKY
DETAILED 3 PRINTED KIT WITH P-E PARTS AND DECALS
MADE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

4

STUH 42 AUSF. G
MID PRODUCTION
MILITARY VEHICLES SERIES
72115
MiniArt
SCALE
1:72

5

'Danger! Mines!'
Ukraine, summer 2022
ICM
1:35
35018

6

4

M29C Weasel 'Amphibious Version'

By: CMK **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: MV137 **Price:** €20
Web: www.cmkkits.com

For years the M29 Weasel has received little attention as a modelling subject, but recently there's been a resurgence of interest, with resin and styrene 1/35 versions and now CMK's excellent 3D-printed resin 1/72 scale offering. There are just 18 resin components, with the main hull rendered as a single item, which is then joined with one-piece running gear/track components on each side. These are joined by a photo-etched brass fret, which provides for the windscreen (along with a small sheet of pre-printed acetate for the glazing), tiller, light guards and a perforated exhaust cover. The detail is exquisite, whether it's the hull with its engine cover and its integral dials, the exhaust, with hollow nozzle or open driver's position (which receives a separate steering wheel), the convincing tread on the track links or the representation of wheel nuts on the running gear. Smaller items include rudder assemblies (with the previously mentioned tiller) and a radio unit – complete with carry handles. Modellers will need to source wire when scratch-building the advised radio antenna and tiller control cables. There's a generous selection of four schemes on the well-printed decal sheet, each depicting either a different armed force and/or location, although the camouflage is overall FS 34087 Olive Drab:

- US Army, Rhine crossings, March 1945
- US Marines, Okinawa, summer 1945
- British Army, The Netherlands, February-March 1945
- 5th Inf Div, US Army, Soumarský most, south Bohemia, May 1945

5

StuH 42 Ausf.G Mid-Production

By: MiniArt **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 72115 **Price:** £21.99
Web: www.creativemodels.co.uk

A recent addition to MiniArt's range of small-scale StuG/StuH vehicles, this Stuh 42 depicts a mid-production Ausf. G variant. There are 11 styrene runners – including a clear frame for the driver's vision blocks and commander's cupola – plus a photo-etched (PE) brass fret, which supplies individual Schürzen plates for the side skirts, mudguard attachments, exhaust grilles and grab handles. Changes from the initial early production kit (72114) include the revised engine deck, lower hull and glacis (with provision for a central Notek lamp), but the mid-production vehicles retained the rubber-tyred return rollers, welded mantlet, while lacking the co-axial MG 34 in the mantlet. If you've not seen the detail in these small-scale offerings, then you're in for a pleasant surprise. There is slide-mounted gun barrel with integral muzzle brake that features a hollow muzzle, and the hull features convincing weld beads and rivets; the main highlight, though, must be the tracks and running gear. The former are in link-and-length format and exhibit superb tread plus guide horns, while the latter capture the early style of wheels with rubber 'tyres'. The decal sheet is small, but the minimal markings carried by wartime vehicles means there's plenty of space for four machines; all wear different versions of two- and three-tone camouflage, and the more complex patterns will be extremely challenging to tackle in 1/72; the choices are:

- Black 231, Eastern Front, autumn 1943
- White 107, Eastern Front, autumn 1943
- Stug.Abt. 237, Elnya, Eastern Front, autumn 1943
- StuG.Abt. 276, Eastern Front, autumn 1943

6

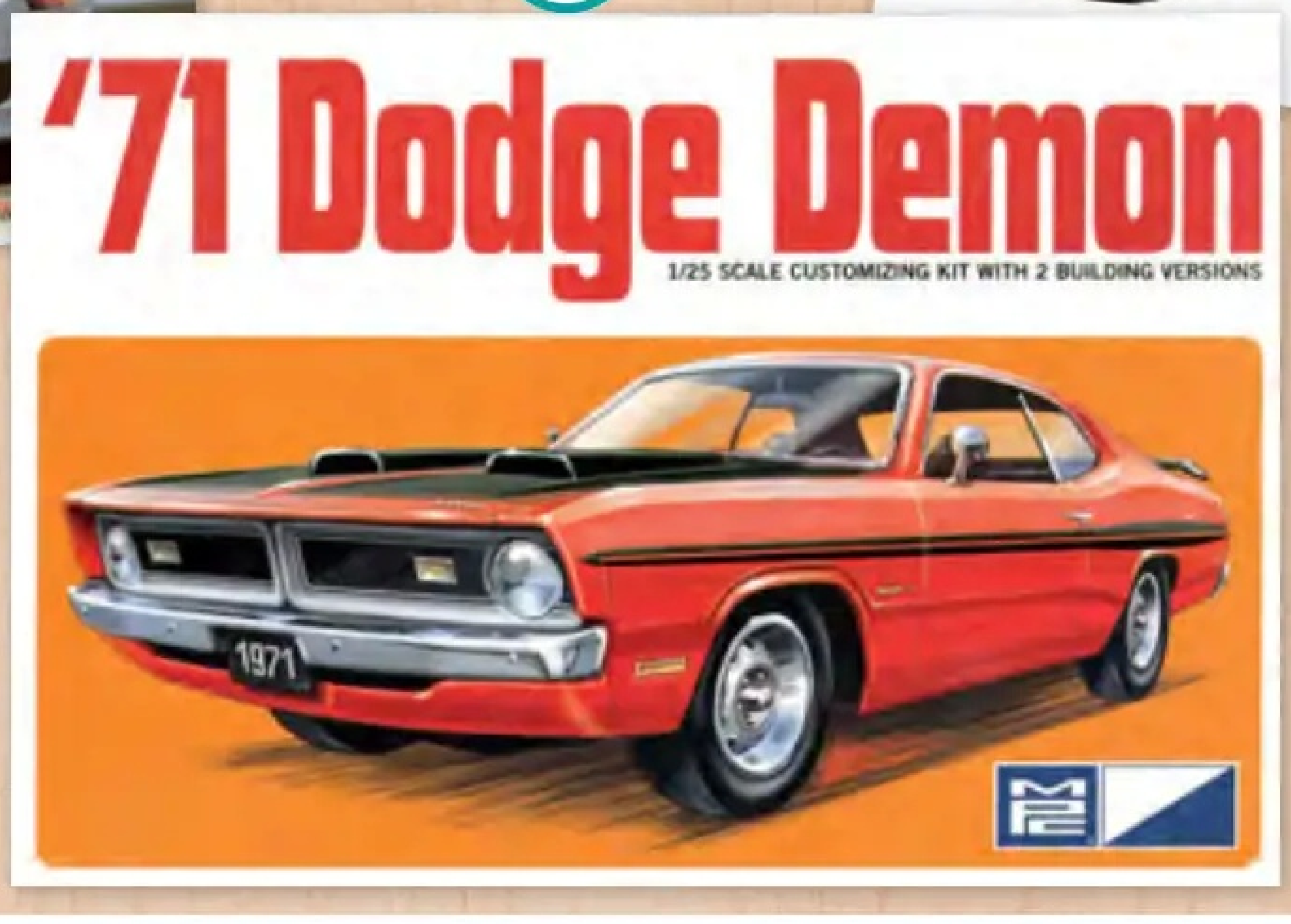
'Danger! Mines!'

By: ICM **Scale:** 1/35
Item no: 35018 **Price:** £43.80
Web: www.hannants.co.uk

Given ICM's propensity for combining its figure and vehicle sets, it was only a matter of time until its de-mining crew "To be ahead, to save the life" (35753) was reissued with the likes of its Zil-131 truck (35515), and that's just the case here. The parts for these individual products are unchanged, comprising a one and seven styrene runners respectively (with solid vinyl tyres for the truck); but they are boosted by a further two frames specific to this combo-pack, providing a well-detailed driver figure and reconfigured seat pads to match, plus a set of two wooden boxes and 18 TM-62 anti-tank mines. This is a diorama in a box, with all you need to recreate a scene involving sappers clearing a minefield. The figure set features one soldier digging with an entrenching tool, another is using a metal detector to sweep an area for mines, while holding a prodder over his shoulder; the third is a mine-detecting dog handler, with his canine assistant sniffing for explosives. The sappers' equipment is a plus, with well renderd weapons and helmets. ICM's splendid ZiL-131 received new markings for a digital-style four-tone camouflage (thankfully all supplied in decal form, so no need for tedious masking) to represent a vehicle as seen in the summer of 2022. While the basic kit is now ten years old, the contents more than stand up to scrutiny, with no flash or moulding flaws to be seen, plus they feature crisp detail, most apparent on the well-appointed engine and cab, plus the faithfully replicated chassis and suspension. Options include open/closed doors and bonnet, while the rear load bed panel can be posed raised or lowered.

BMW 320si [E90]
WTCC BRANDS HATCH 2008 WINNER
Drive the champion: bmw.com/3series
2

1



2

RENAULT 5 TURBO RALLY
9
TAMIYA

3

1

BMW 320si (E90) WTCC Brands Hatch 2008 Winner

By: Hobby NuNu **Scale:** 1/24
Item no: PN24037 **Price:** £54.99
Web: www.hobbyco.net

This recent addition to NuNu's growing BMW range features a fifth-generation BMW 320si saloon racing car. Most parts are newly tooled and it appears that just the main floorpan and interior 'shell' (Parts A1 and B1), plus the wheels and tyres are common. There are 13 styrene runners in total, of which all but four are moulded in white, the remainder comprising two clear and two chrome-plated frames. While some modellers may wish to strip the chrome and respray, the plating is well done and runner gates are positioned so that any bare sections won't be visible once assembled. The moulding standard is excellent throughout, with no sign of flash or sink marks, plus the transparencies are all crystal clear. This is essentially a 'kerbside' kit, so while there is a separate bonnet, there's no engine, and the doors are moulded shut. The spartan nature of a racing vehicle interior is captured faithfully, with just the driver's bucket-type seat (a harness is included on the decal sheet). Markings are supplied for the winner of Race 1 at the Brands Hatch World Touring Car Championship event in 2008, as driven by BMW Team Germany's Jörg Müller. All trim is supplied in decal form, which will make painting easier, as will the provision of self-adhesive masks for the glazing (you'll need to cut them out with a sharp knife or scissors, though). All items are printed beautifully, with perfect register and strong opacity, so there shouldn't be any issue with underlying colours showing through.

2

'71 Dodge Demon

By: MPC **Scale:** 1/25
Item no: MPC997 **Price:** £47.99
Web: www.bachmann.co.uk

MPC's Dodge Demon is a newly tooled kit of this classic American muscle car and provides parts for either a stock or drag racing-configured vehicle. It comprises six styrene runners, plus separate floorpan, bodyshell and bonnet; one frame has chrome-plated components (for the wheels and brightwork) and a second supplies all glazing and transparencies. Slick and 'street' tyres are included and these have pre-printed manufacturer logos on the sidewalls. There is a pleasing replica of the type's four-barrel carburettor-fitted 340 cu in (5.6 lit) engine, complete with transmission, and this can be displayed thanks to a poseable bonnet. A representation of the air scoop holes is moulded into the bonnet, but modellers may wish to drill these for a more convincing effect. The drag racer has an internal roll-cage and there's an optional rear spoiler, while the inclusion of a chrome-plated gear lever is a neat touch. Make sure to keep the box handy as this provides painting suggestions and the runner/parts layout. Two markings schemes (one each drag and stock) are depicted in the instructions, but a third – a bright yellow-coloured drag racer – is profiled on the box sides. There's also a choice as to whether sponsorship brands are added to the car sides, making for even greater variety, so references will be vital if you're replicating a specific vehicle. The decals are well printed, with gloss carrier film – note, though, that there are large clear sections on the 'demon' markings plus a bonnet-top item, so modellers may wish to remove this to limit the chance of silvering.

3

Renault 5 Turbo Rally

By: Tamiya **Scale:** 1/24
Item no: 24027 **Price:** £25.99
Web: www.hobbyco.net

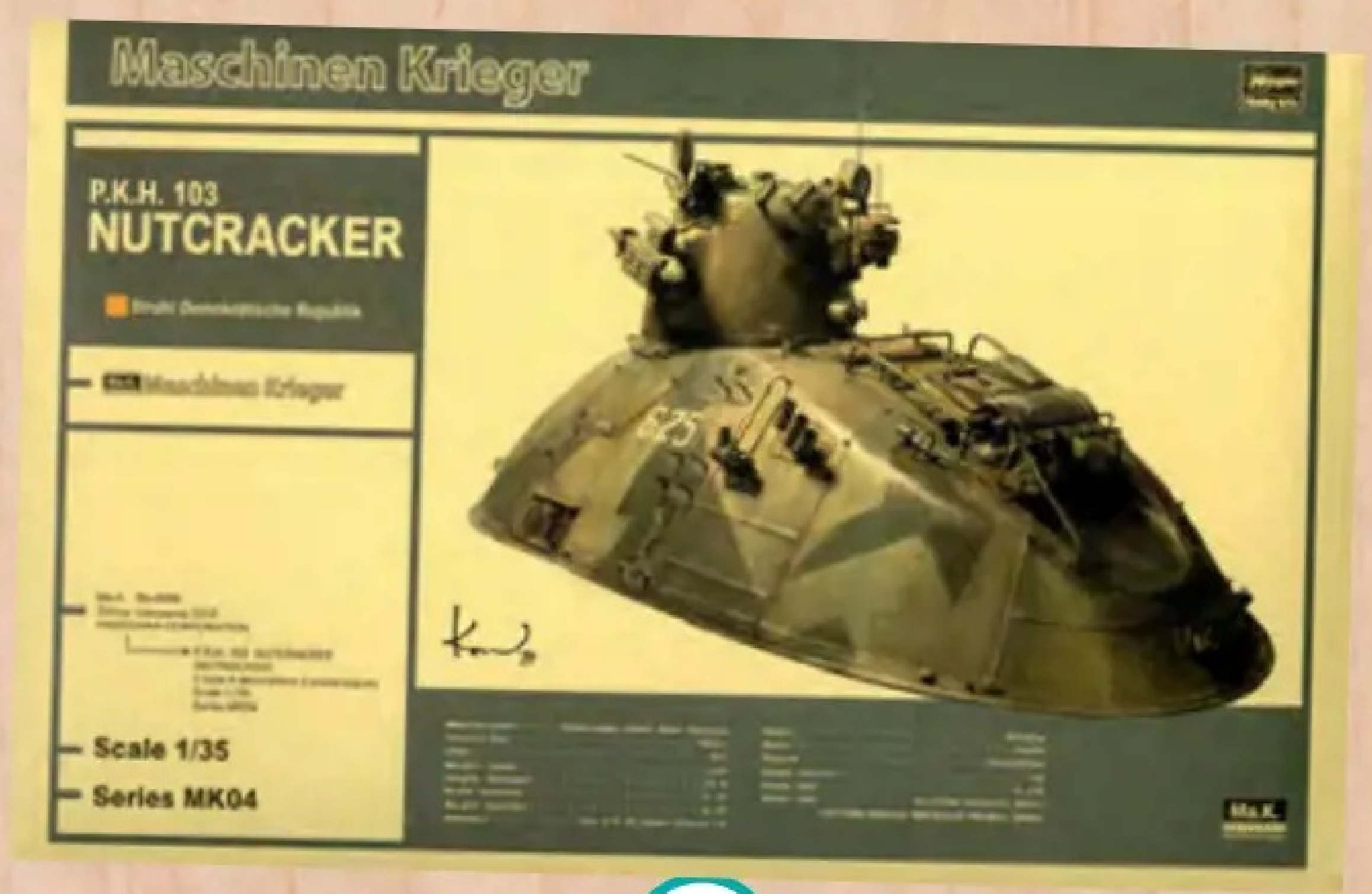
When Tamiya's Renault 5 rally car was first released in 1982, it was streets ahead of contemporary products and – in terms of moulding and detail –still holds up well today. Moulded fittings for an electric motor and lighting remain, but all reference to these items has been removed from the instructions. Similarly, the original 'bright' chrome-plated wheels are replaced with more muted aluminium-coloured examples and there's new metal axle for the rear wheels (replacing the motor linkages). All other parts appear unchanged, even being moulded in the same off-white styrene. From a build perspective it appears to be straightforward; the front wheels can be turned to add interest and there's an option to include driver and navigator figures. While these last items might not compare with modern resin figures, there's still plenty of pleasing detail, from the well-defined seat harness to the shape of the helmets. One big difference is the inclusion of extra painting guidance for the one-piece bodyshell, which provides clear instructions on the various colours. Most use Tamiya's acrylics or aerosol sprays, but there are also references to the firm's newer lacquer-based products. The markings are unchanged from the original release, but benefit from modern printing technology, providing for car #9 as driven to victory by Jean Ragnotti and Jean-Marc Andrié at the 1981 Monte Carlo rally, complete with all sponsorship branding. The kit's low-parts count and simplicity make this an ideal entry subject for modellers, plus its retail price is wallet-friendly too.

YF-21
ADVANCED VARIABLE FIGHTER
MACROSS PLUS

①

CREATOR WORKS
64785
SPACE WOLF SW-190 'War against Mazone'
w/YUKI KEI FIGURE
1:72

②



③

①

YF-21 Advanced Variable Fighter

By: Hasegawa **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 65711 **Price:** £34.99
Web: www.amerang.co.uk

This beautifully detailed kit by Hasegawa represents one of the two variable-fighter prototypes from the anime series *Macross Plus*; in this case, the General Galaxy YF-21. It comprises eight styrene runners, including two frames for the clear parts, plus an excellent decal sheet that supplies the airframe trim and markings. Real-world design inspiration comes from Northrop's YF-23, with the broad rear fuselage and undercarriage configuration being the most notable similarities. Hasegawa has moulded the parts in a bright blue styrene, so it can be assembled without painting if desired, but colour matches with Mr. Hobby/Color products are included for those prefer to use paint. Notably, though, the blue section on the decal sheet is darker than the styrene, so modellers may want to match their paint mixes to this shade, rather than Hasegawa's suggested mix. Detail-wise, there's lots to enjoy; the cockpit appears to match screenshots, complete with the pilot's rather bulky pressure/G suit, and there are reasonable renderings of the undercarriage bays, although that for the nosewheel appears shallow. External detail is rendered as finely engraved lines, with stealth aspects, such as the use of diamond-type fairings/control surface edges captured faithfully, while the type's unusual shapes – due to the ability of the variable fighter to transform into a robot mode – are replicated similarly. The finishing touch comes in the form of a superb decal sheet, with a choice of hi/low-vis UN Spacy logos and legends, plus full stencilling.

②

Space Wolf SW-190 'War against Mazone' w/Yuki Kei Figure

By: Hasegawa **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 64785 **Price:** £47.99
Web: www.amerang.co.uk

Blasting straight from the pages/screen of the original *Space Pirate Captain Harlock* manga/anime series, the Space Wolf SW-190 is essentially a sci-fi version of the German Focke-Wulf Fw 190 fighter. This limited-edition offering also includes a resin figure of combat commander Yuki Kei, one of the *Arcadia's* principle crewmembers. This seven-piece ensemble is 78mm high, making it roughly 1/24 scale and replicates her slim form (described in the series as 'willowy') well; her hair, arms and holstered pistol come separately, but once removed from the casting blocks this should be easy to assemble. Turning to the fighter, it's an absolute cracker; there are fine engraved panel lines and the clean shape match its screen appearance perfectly. There are representations of the intakes and main exhausts, while modellers will have fun identifying those components incorporated from the Fw 190 – although the ventral intake arguably takes inspiration from the P-151 Mustang. It can be built with raised/lowered undercarriage, but just a closed canopy configuration is offered (a pilot figure is included). Three markings schemes are provided, depicting three different squadrons, matching the logos as seen on World War Two Jagdgeschwader 3 and Kampfgeschwader 100 airframes. These are joined by stylised depictions of the Grim Reaper, Tori-San (the *Arcadia's* bird character) and pirate skull with crossed sabres logo. A well-designed base doubles as a display stand, and incorporates the classic pirate's skull and crossbones insignia (supplied separately in off-white styrene).

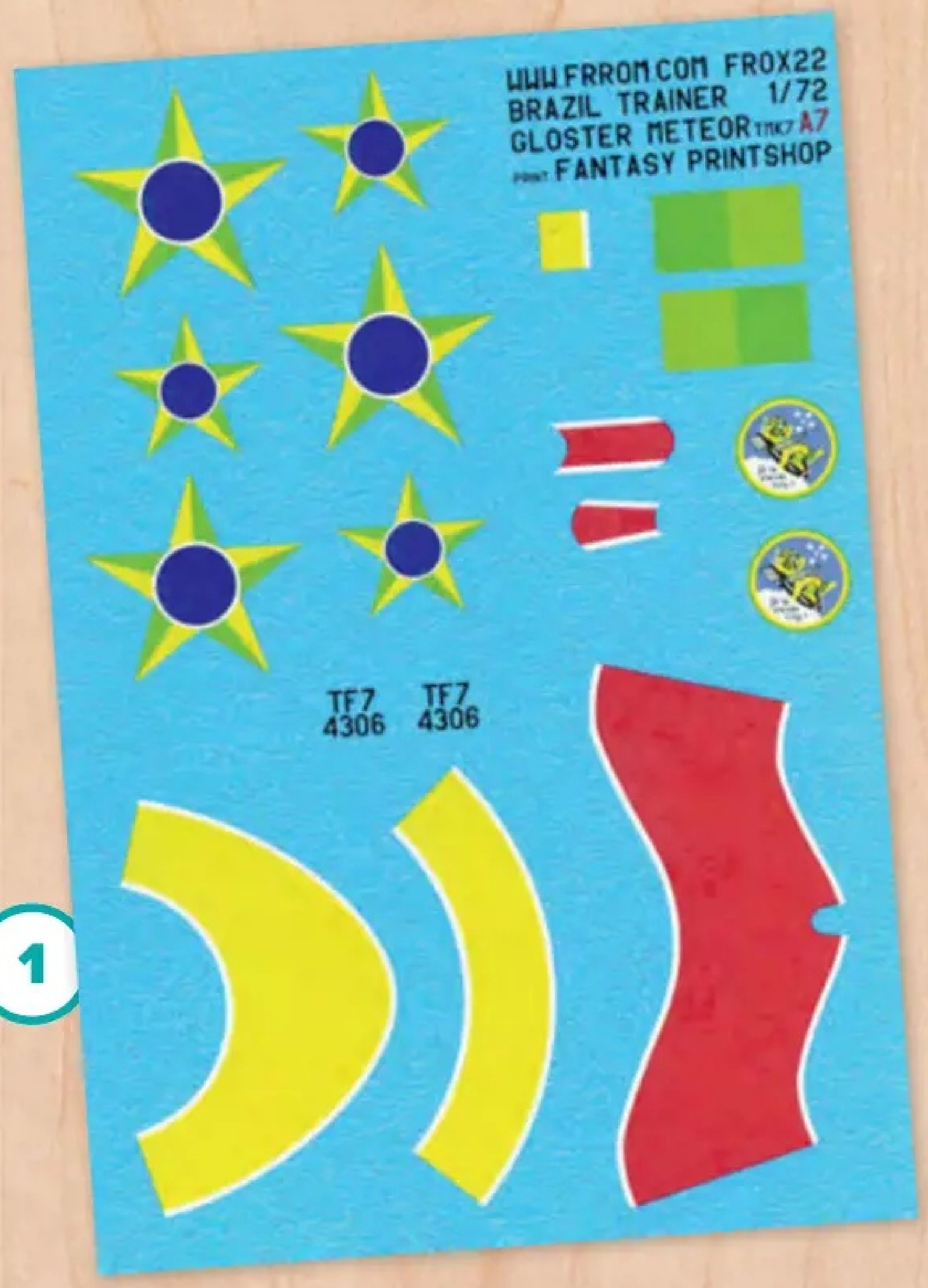
③

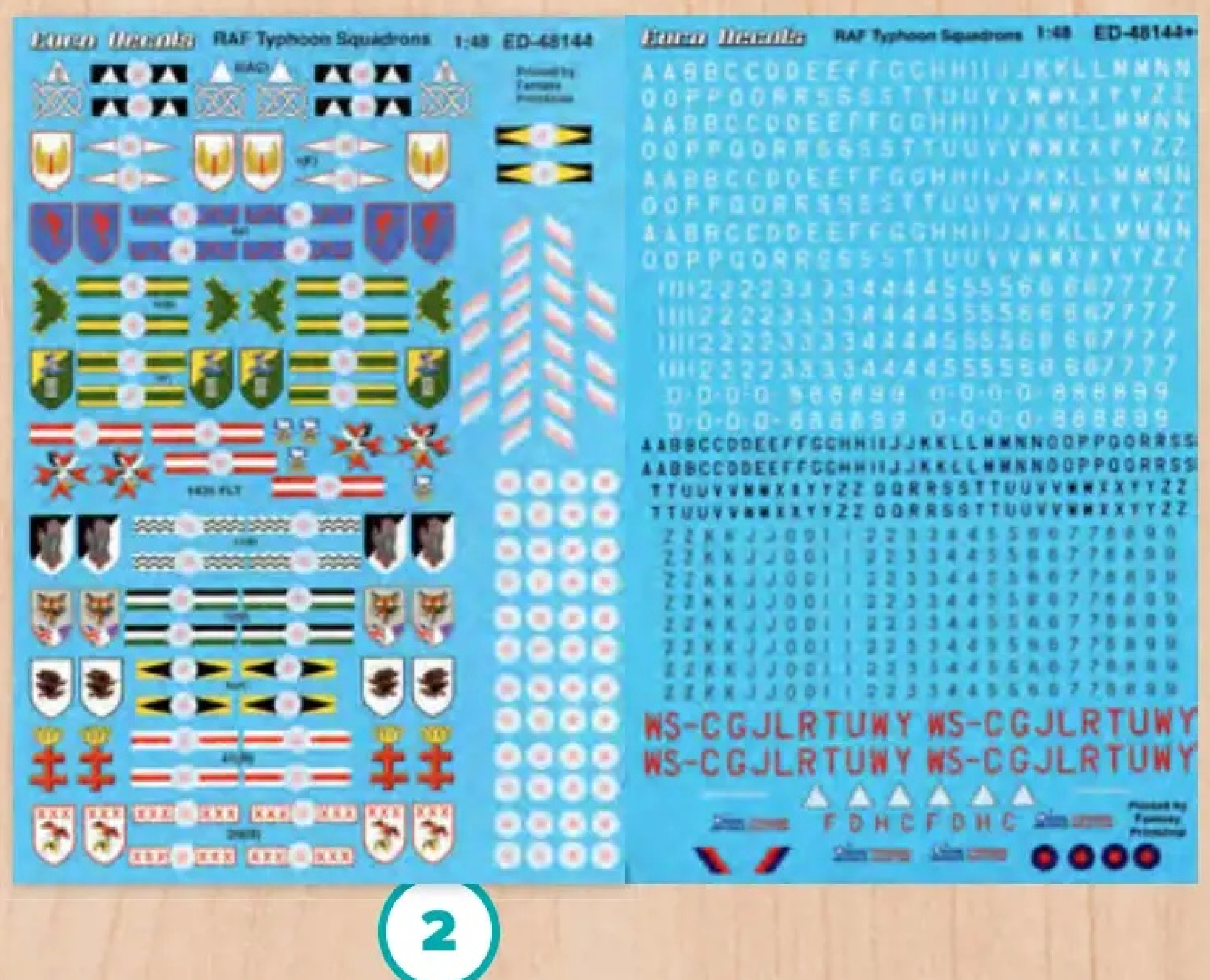
PKH 103 Nutcracker

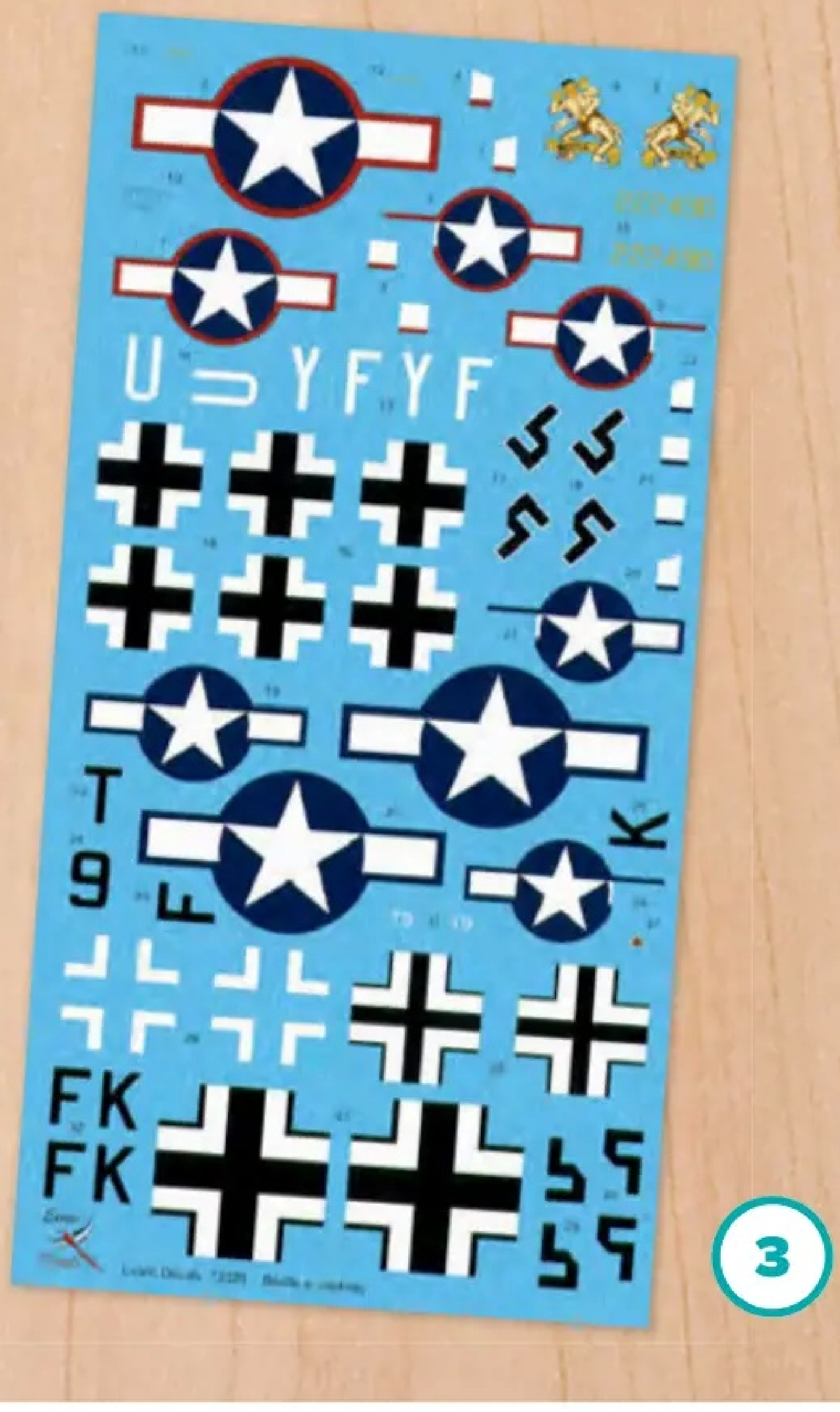
By: Hasegawa **Scale:** 1/35
Item no: 64004/MK04 **Price:** £89.99
Web: www.amerang.co.uk

The Japanese Maschinen Krieger sci-fi series has produced several armoured/mecha-type subjects, and Hasegawa has reissued the PKH 103 Nutcracker armoured hover tank in its original guise, which includes a pair of armoured combat suits (designated as PKA). It's essentially a diorama in a box - sans base - but the use of 1/35 scale means there are plenty of aftermarket products for this. The tank comprises six styrene runners, including one for the main spot lamp, plus vinyl joints for the turret weapons, separate upper and lower hull halves, and a turret top. No interior detail is provided, but there are inserts for the hull features, while the exterior is adorned with various forms of equipment. The turret boasts a complement of smoke dispensers (optional extras are also available for the lower hull), plus laser cannon, optics, searchlight and main laser weapon. Two armoured suits can be built, with one example each of versions designated Ausf G 'Gustav' and Ausf M 'Melusine'. Differences centre on the body/pilot's compartment, with the Melusine machine having a broader structure. Options include an integral arm laser cannon or Neupanzerfaust grenade launcher. Four markings schemes are supplied, although generic numbers mean modellers can make their own vehicle:

- White 625, 1 Kampanie, s.Pz.Abt.501
- Yellow 02, 5 Kampanie, s.Pz.Abt.503
- Red 31, 1 Kampanie 'Yeti', Panzerjäger. Abt.401
- Yellow 7, 3 Kampanie 'Salamander Sieben', s.Pz.Abt.501







①

Brazil Meteor T.MK.7

By: Azur-FRROM **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: FR0X22 **Price:** €6.60
Web: www.frrom.com

If you're a fan of Latin-American military aircraft, or the Gloster Meteor in particular, this new decal sheet by Azur-FRROM is worth considering. It provides markings for a sprayed-aluminium two-seat T.7 airframe with the serial 4306 (ex-WS148) and markings for 1°/14° GAV, (Aviation Group), based at Base Aérea de Canoas, Brazil. They are designed to be employed with the company's own 1/72 T.7 (itself being a re-boxing of the Special Hobby/MPM kit), which features all the correct structural nuances for Brazilian two-seat Meteors. The sheets provide red accents for the fuselage and vertical stabiliser leading edge, plus yellow bands for the nose and rear of each engine nacelle. Optional styles of national insignia are present, plus beautifully designed unit badges. However, a small error appears in that the yellow of the tail flashes has printed as pale green, but the instructions highlight the problem and suggest masking and painting the yellow segments instead. Decent opacity is a plus-point of these markings, especially on the yellow décor, which should ensure there is no issue with underlying tones being visible. Modellers will need to rely on the kit markings for items such as stencils, wing walkway lines and emergency placards. Azur-FRROM provides a potted history of the type's service with the Brazilian Air Force, along with clear guidance for painting and decal placement, plus a listing of useful references for those wanting to either add detail or weather their models.

②

RAF Typhoon Squadrons

By: Euro Decals **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: ED-48144 **Price:** £38.95
Web: www.fantasyprintshop.com

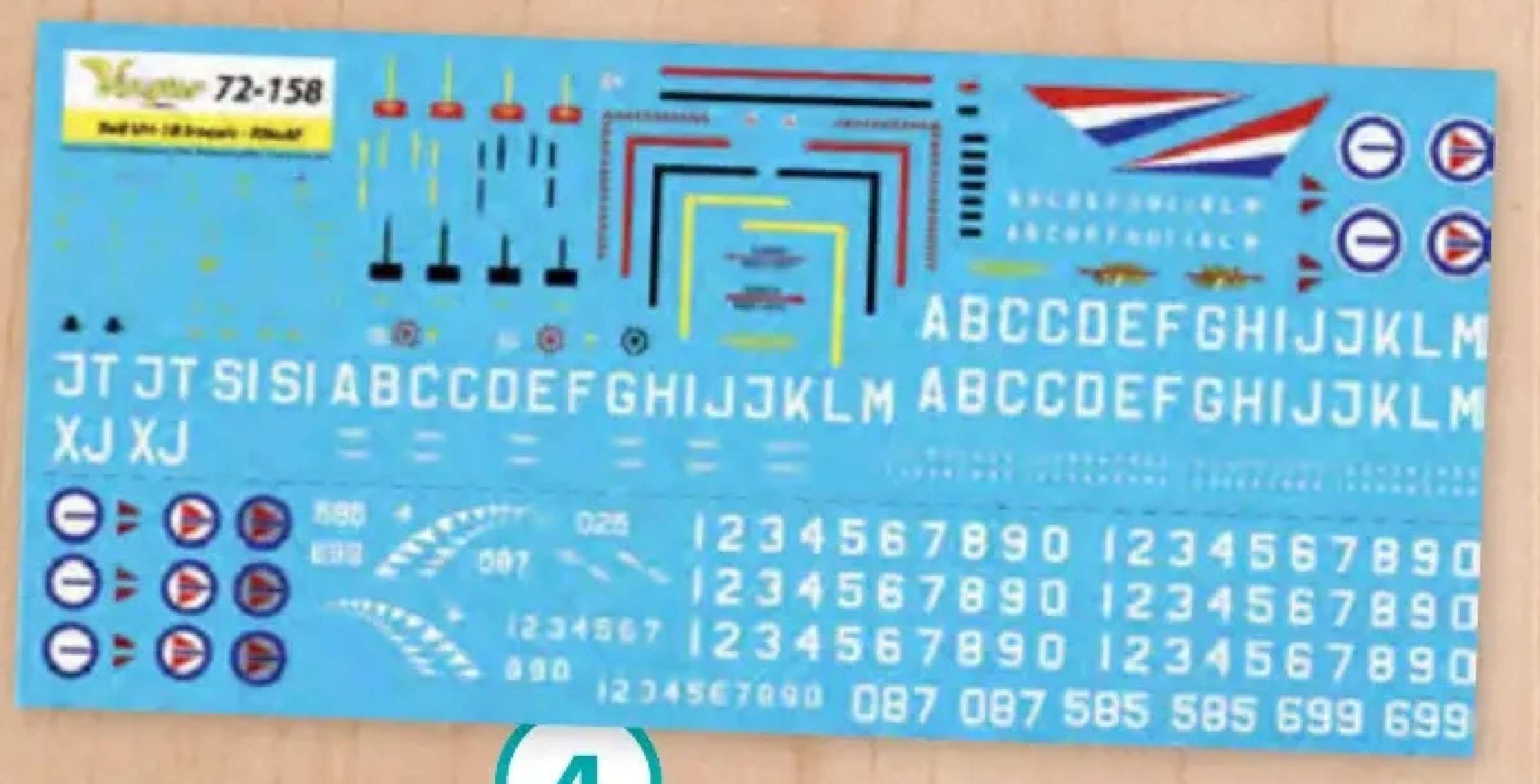
UK-based firm Euro Decals will please RAF fans who build in 1/48 scale, with its new and comprehensive package of markings for the Eurofighter Typhoon. Hot on the heels of Air-Graphic's 1/72 RAF Typhoon markings released recently (see *Decals, AMW*173, April 2025), Euro Decals' new two-sheet product in 1/48 offers all the same 'uniforms' for the type in RAF service (the company printed Air-Graphic's Typhoon sheet). As with the smaller-scale offering, it provides generic serials and codes for both single-seat and two-seat airframes, plus more specific décor, all the relevant unit badges and a generous helping of national insignia. While a great many of the RAF's Typhoons past and present can be replicated – including the mostly black IX(B) aggressor airframe – Euro's instructions offer 41 specific colour profiles, four scrap tail views and six plan drawings, with example airframes from each 'Tiffie' unit (both current and previous). As with the Air-Graphic sheet, the squadrons represented are: 1(F), II(AC), 3(F), 6(F), IX(B), XI(F), 12(B), 17(R), 29(R), 41(R) and 1435 Flight. Best of all, there enough unit insignia for two airframes for each unit; the printing is first-rate, with crisp tonal boundaries and perfect register, while the opacity is spot-on, ensuring that underlying tones won't be visible through the markings. If you love the Typhoon but felt ignored when Air-Graphic issued its 1/72 markings, then Euro Decals has certainly come to your rescue with this impressive collection... budget allowing, you can build RAF Typhoons in different guises until the cows come home.

③

Beetle in captivity

By: Exotic Decals **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 72029 **Price:** €10
Web: www.toro-model.com.pl

If you're keen on Republic's P-47 Thunderbolt, the new markings collection from Exotic Decals offers an interesting theme, depicting the USAAF 'razorback' P-47D 42-22490 *BEETLE*. This Steeple Morden, Cambridgeshire-based airframe flown by the 358th Fighter Squadron, 355th Fighter Group, became well known after its capture and subsequent operations with the German Luftwaffe. The P-47D was 'gifted' to the Luftwaffe when its inexperienced pilot, 2nd Lt William E Roach (along with several squadron mates) became lost in poor weather and landed at the wrong airfield. Exotic's set provides enough markings to replicate all four of *BEETLE's* liveries. The first is that worn on the aircraft's capture. For an appearance in a Luftwaffe propaganda film, Roach's Thunderbolt received a white horizontal band on each side of the vertical stabiliser, and had yellow paint applied to its upper and lower engine cowling panels. The next livery replicates the machine when it resided at the Test and Research Centre at Rechlin, Germany, in December 1943, gaining yellow panels under the outer wing sections and German markings. Finally, Exotic offers décor for the airframe's service with 2. Staffel Versuchsverband Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe, at Gättingen, Germany, in the summer of 1944. The codes T9+FK sat on the fuselage sides and under the wings. Quality-wise, Exotic's decals are fabulous, having thin, gloss carrier film and excellent colour tones. The Swastikas are segmented as is common now, while the *BEETLE* nose art is particularly well rendered – and the white markings exhibit pleasing opacity.



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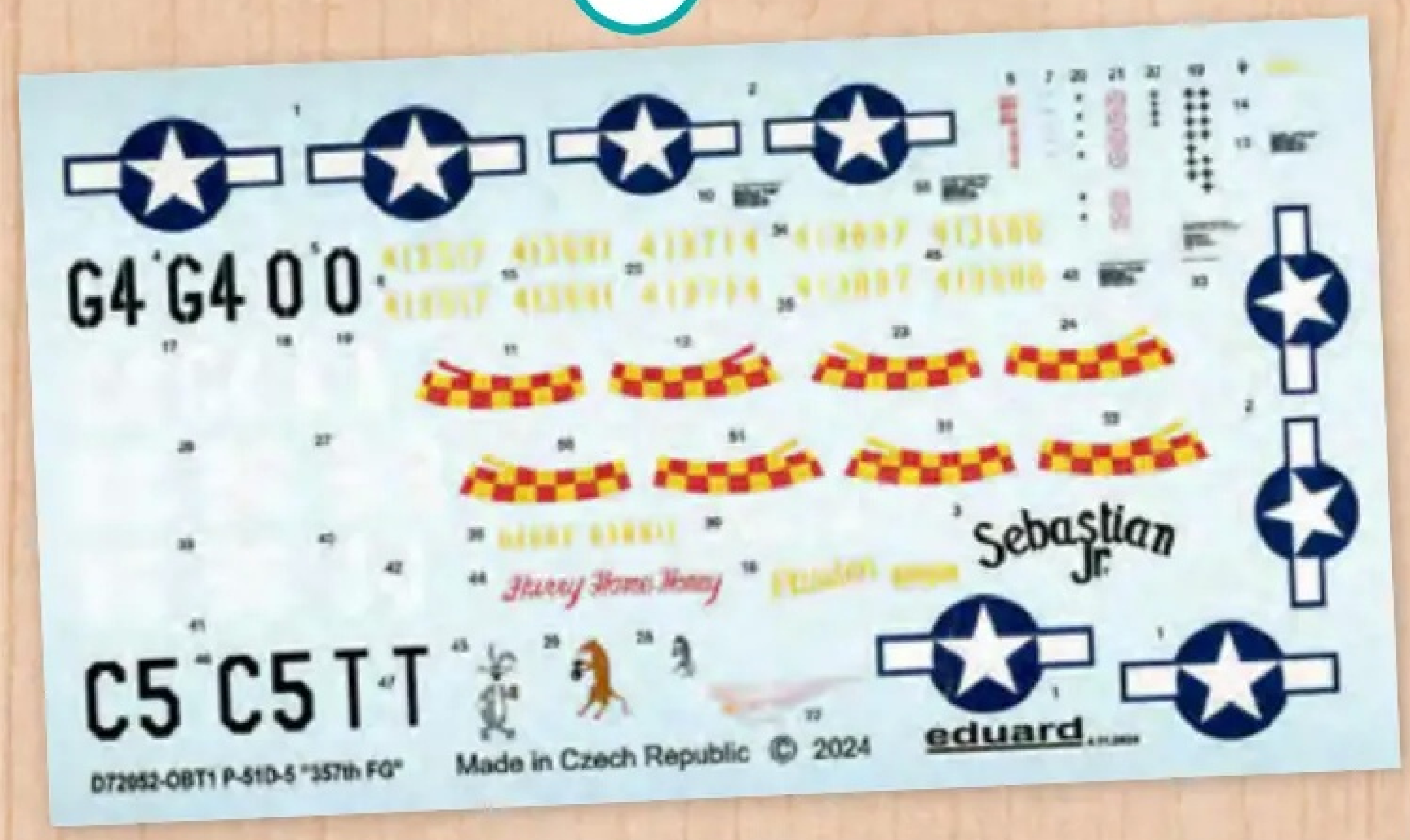

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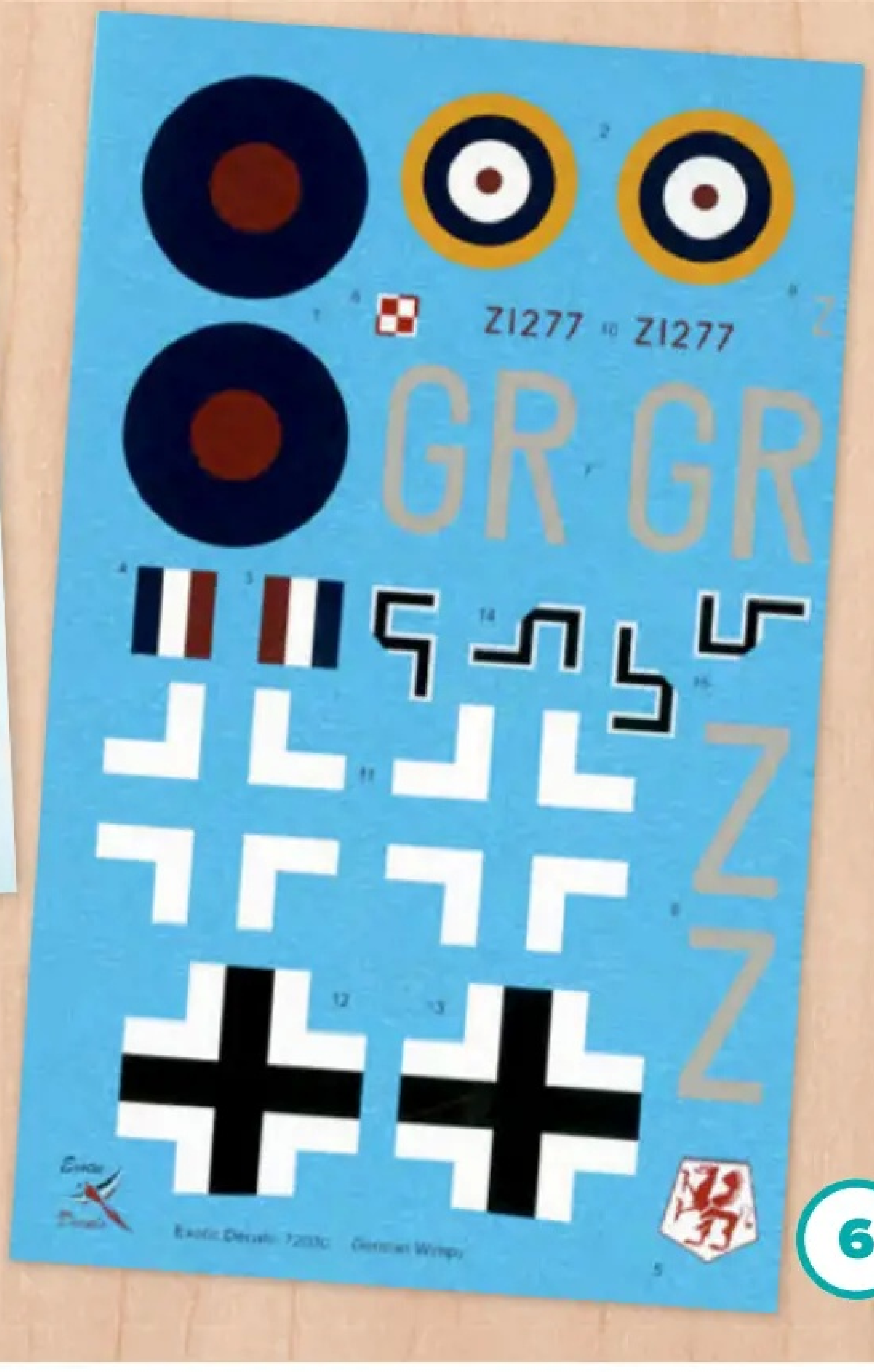

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4

Bell UH-1B Iroquois – RNoAF

By: Vingtor Decals **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 72-158 **Price:** £8.82
Web: www.vingtor.net

Modellers who enjoy building rotary-wing subjects have a splendid selection of markings with Vingtor's new 1/72 decals for Royal Norwegian Air Force UH-1B airframes. Norway began flying the UH-1B in 1963 and received around 36 examples between then and 1976. Interestingly, there were notable nuances with particular examples, such as larger long-range fuel tanks, 'twisted' tail fins, whereby a broader chord was evident, plus repositioning of the tail light. All these subtleties are described on Vingtor's instruction sheet, which also offers artwork for six different UH-1Bs. In reality, though, the rows of generic serial numbers and letters provided mean you should be able to build any Iroquois in the fleet. Codes for locally manufactured paint and Federal Standard shades are quoted, plus useful notes on the colours and markings, as well as advice on available 1/72 UH-1B kits. The decals themselves are superb, being printed by Czech firm BOA with thin, gloss carrier film and excellent colour tones. The instructions are in colour and can be downloaded from Vingtor's website. Some of the machines shown wear Olive Drab, but standouts include one helicopter with whitewash on the tail boom and a white shark mouth. The helicopters shown on the instructions are:

- 63-12855/XJ-C, 79 Squadron, Bodø, 1967
- 61-0699/699, 720 Squadron, Rygge, 1986
- 62-2025/025, 720 Squadron, Rygge, 1989
- 64-13965/JT-G, 720 Squadron, Rygge, 1968
- 66-14420/SI-M, 339 Squadron, Bardufoss, 1968
- 63-12856/XJ-D, 719 Squadron, Bodø, 1987
- 63-13087/087 *Knut-Aage*, 339 Squadron, Bardufoss, 1980

5

P-51D-5 '357th FG'

By: Eduard **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: D72052 **Price:** £5.77
Web: www.eduard.com

Eduard's new-tool 1/72 P-51D Mustang impressed many modellers who favour this scale. Thankfully, the firm opted to also offer the early -5 airframe, lacking the dorsal fin fillet. Now, Eduard has printed aftermarket decals for use on its 1/72 P-51D-5 kits. The common thread is that all five airframes belonged to squadrons within the Eighth Air Force's storied 357th Fighter Group, the so-called 'Yoxford Boys', based at Leiston in Suffolk. All airframes feature Olive Drab over either bare metal or Neutral Gray, while the fuselage demarcation line runs at two different heights depending on the individual P-51D-5. These decals are relatively thin and have good register, although some modellers may feel the yellow markings are not quite bright enough. The nose art is rendered well, as are the 'kill' markings, while the white décor has decent opacity. While the red/yellow nose chequers are provided, you'll have to match paint for both on the propeller spinner. Invasion stripes and overwing white ID bands adorn all examples and several ace pilots are represented. The options are:

- 44-13517/G4-O *Sebastian Jr*, Capt Robert Becker, 362nd Fighter Squadron (FS), July 1944
- 44-13897/B6-J *DADDY RABBIT*, Capt Charles Peters, 363rd FS, July 1944
- 44-13714/B6-B *DESERT RAT*, 363rd FS, August 1944
- 44-13691/G4-A *Passion WAGON*, Maj Arval J Roberson, FS, August 1944
- 44-13586/C5-T *Hurry Home Honey*, Capt Richard Peterson, 364th FS, autumn 1944

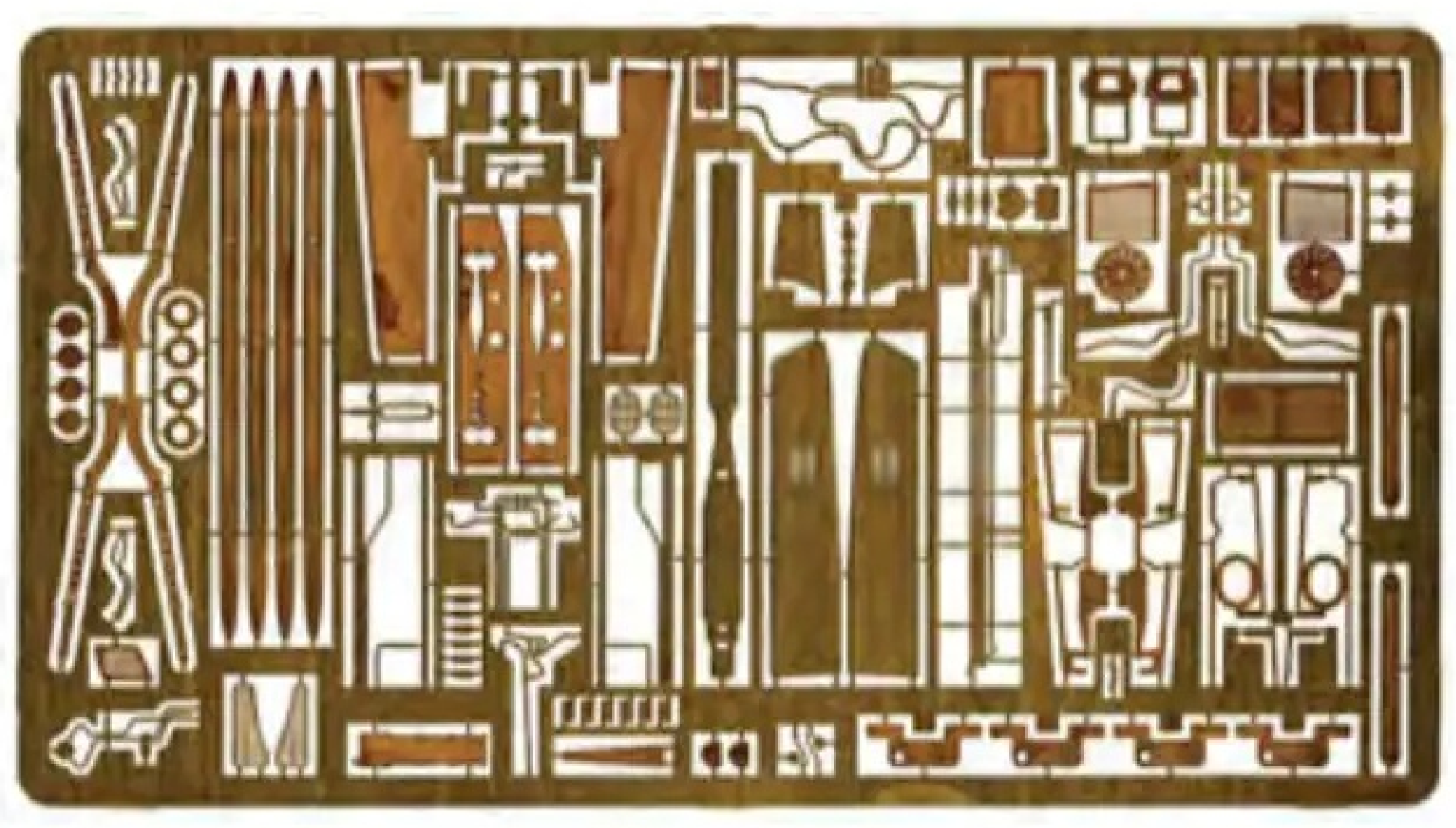
6

German 'Wimpy'

By: Exotic Decals **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: 72030 **Price:** €7
Web: www.toro-model.com.pl

Poland's Exotic Decals has issued markings for another captured Allied aircraft (see p.104 for the P-47 'BEETLE' set), this time featuring the Vickers Wellington. For some modellers, it's fun to portray an aircraft once it's been captured and pressed into service by the enemy. This latest offering provides for Vickers Wellington Mk.IV Z1277/GR-Z in November 1941. The airframe was, at that time, on strength with the RAF's Polish-manned 301 Squadron at Hemswell, Lincolnshire. While participating in a raid November 7, the bomber was hit by flak over Mannheim, Germany and landed at a German-occupied airfield in Belgium, where the crew were taken prisoner. It's original scheme is supplied, involving the-then standard Dark Earth and Dark Green over Night, with Medium Sea Grey codes. However, the Germans added Balkenkreuz and Swastikas to the Wellington (and removed the 'Z' from the codes). It's depicted in this set as it looked two days later, when seen at Maldeghem (now Maldegem), Belgium, having also gained yellow ID panels on the rudder, under the rear turret and the lower half of the engine cowlings.

Exotic's decals exhibit stunning quality, having thin, gloss carrier film, good opacity and rich colour tones. The 301 Squadron badge is well-rendered too. Note, though, these markings are for a Wellington Mk.IV, meaning you'll need to source the out-of-production MPM kit, which replicates this sub-type's Pratt & Whitney Twin Wasp engines and cowlings.



F-14A Late Exterior

By: Eduard **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: 481075 **Price:** £13.99
Web: www.eduard.com

Although stated as being designed for Tamiya's F-14A Late Production kit, this photo-etched (PE) brass set – comprising a single fret – is identical to the Eduard's earlier 48909 F-14A Exterior. As such, modellers may want to check references as to whether the gun gas vents are applicable for a given airframe as they changed during the type's US Navy service. That said, the PE items do add extra refinement to the model's exterior, including representations of the brake cables on the undercarriage, plus extra cabling for the bays; end plates are provided for the AIM-54 pylons, plus base panels for the AIM-9 and AIM-7 launchers. The highlight though is likely to be the replacement access ladder, which will require scratch-built rungs.

US 12in/50 Mark 8 Gun Barrels

By: Master Model **Scale:** 1/700
Item no: SM-700-063 **Price:** £6.20
Web: www.master-model-pl

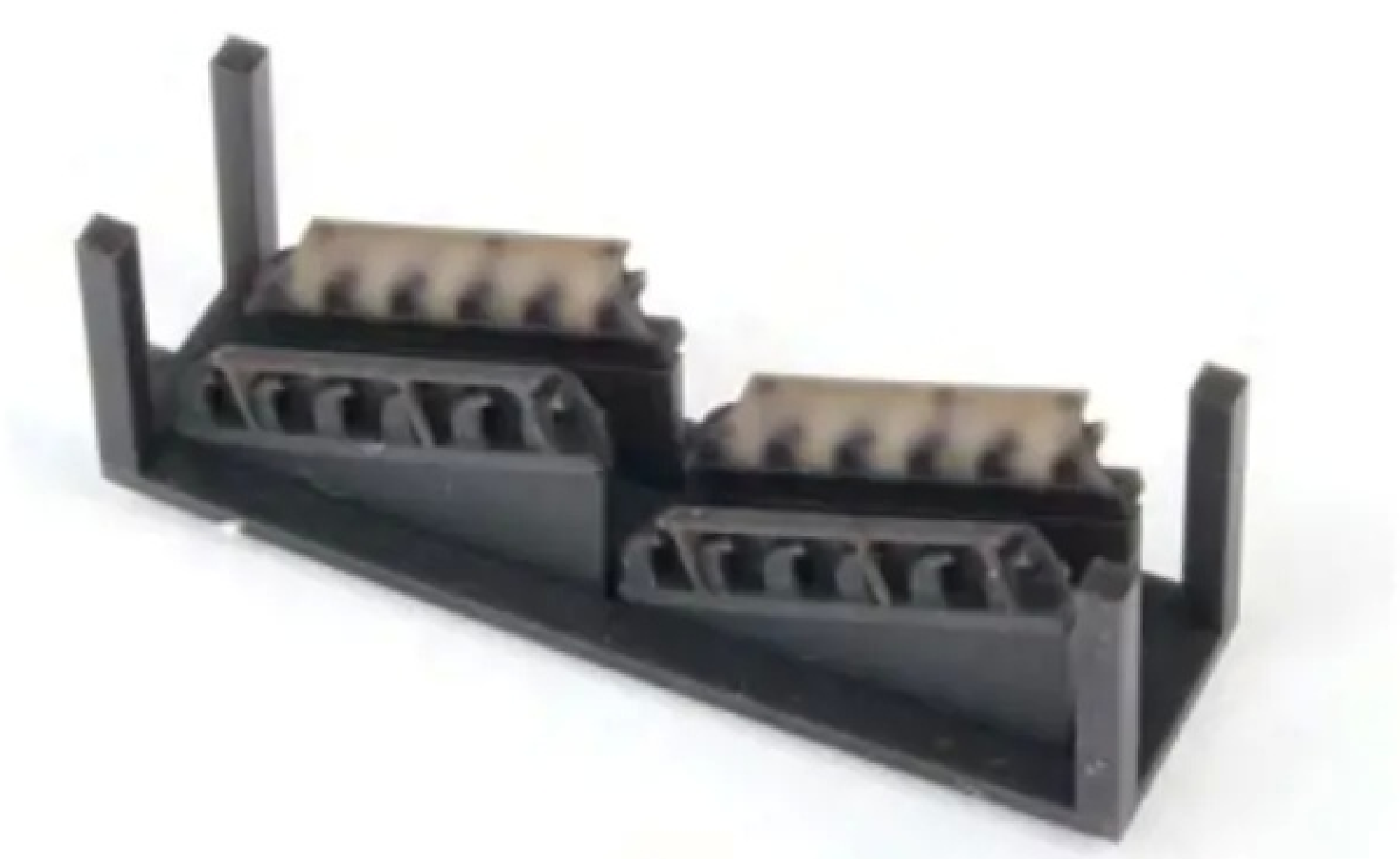
One boon of the growing use of turned brass for ship accessories has been the provision of scale-accurate gun barrels with hollow muzzles – and with no need to tackle those occasionally troublesome moulding seams or steps in the styrene caused by mis-aligned moulds. This set of nine barrels is designed to suit the likes of Trumpeter's 1/700 scale Alaska-class heavy cruisers (USS *Alaska* and *Guam*) and these replace the kit's styrene main armament in their entirety. As usual with is type of accessory, modellers will need to remove the styrene gun barrels, drill a locating hole in the remaining plastic, before securing the new brass barrels in place with superglue.

MiniArt
49011
GARAGE WORKSHOP
SCALE
1:48
ACCESSORIES AND FIGURES SERIES

Garage Workshop

By: MiniArt **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: 49011 **Price:** £16.99
Web: www.creativemodels.co.uk

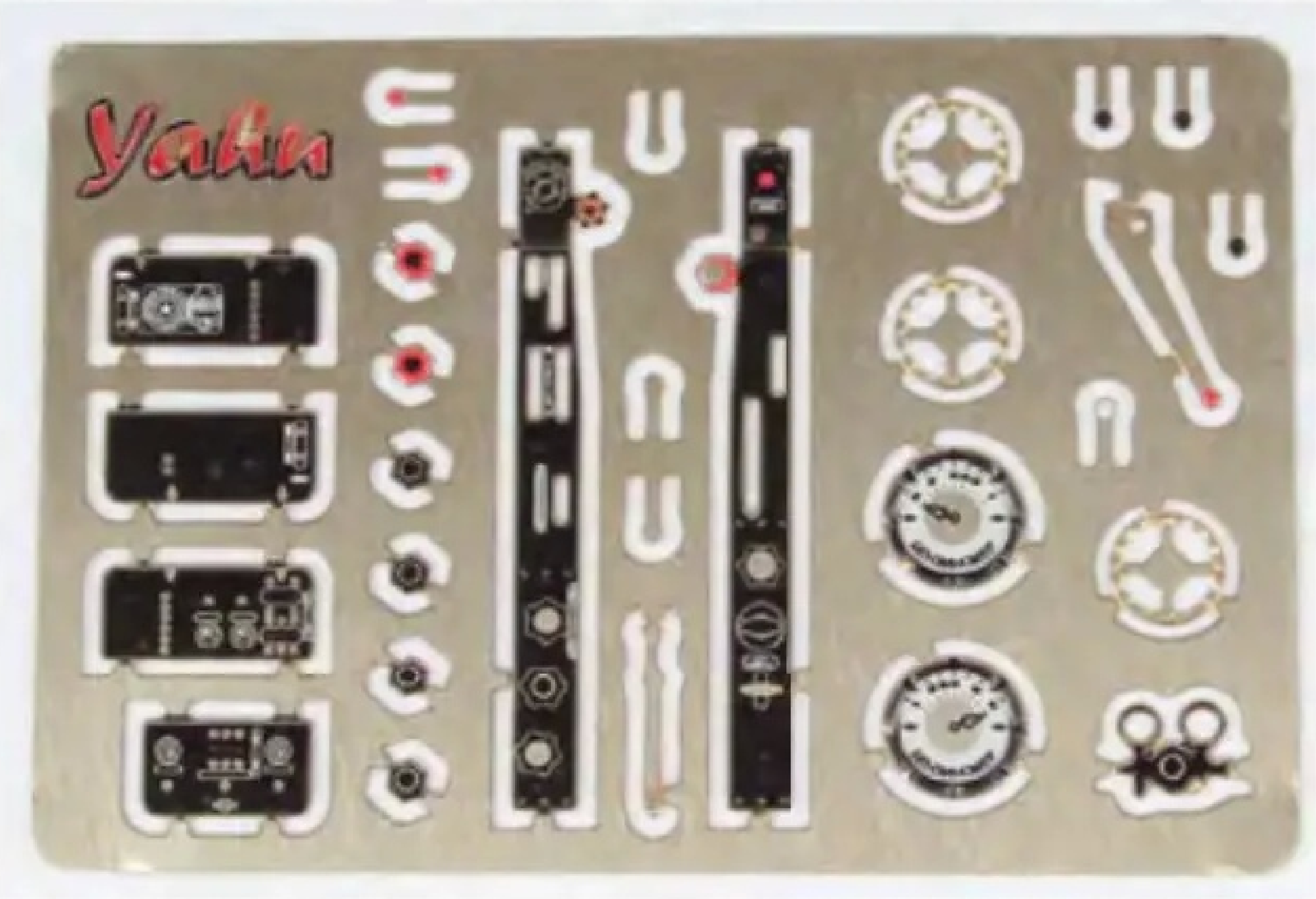
MiniArt has been scaling down its many accessory sets from 1/35 to 1/48 to cater for the growing interest in this format. A recent addition this range is the Garage Workshop, which comprises six styrene runners plus a photo-etched brass fret and a decal sheet, this last item supplying a variety of brand names for oils and fuels. Two workbenches are supplied, along with a pair of metal-type storage shelves, a generator/motor, worktop-mounted grinding tool, vice and drill – these are joined by a selection of oil cans, plus 80 and 200 lit drums. Two toolboxes are also supplied, one opened, with a selection of integrally moulded tools plus PE spanners, while the other is closed.



Messerschmitt Me 410 Exhaust Detail Set

By: ASK Distribution **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: A72011 **Price:** €5.90
Web: www.artscale.eu

If you're looking for a quick – yet highly refined – upgrade for your Airfix 1/72 Me 410A-1 kits, then this 3D-printed resin exhaust set is well worth considering. There are just four parts, but these are drop-in replacements for the kit's two-piece sub-assemblies and the differences with the styrene parts are substantial. The end of each stub is hollow, while the anti-glare shroud is wafer thin, meaning that extreme care will be needed when removing these parts from their blocks – fortunately, the resin has been thinned to make this task somewhat easier. Note, though, that several printing 'pens' will need cutting from the nozzles.



Yak-1/1B

By: Yahu Models **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: YMS7223 **Price:** £3.40
Web: www.yahumodels.com

Yahu's recent photo-etched metal upgrade set for the Yak-1 is a quick and easy way of improving a model's appearance, regardless of whether it's by AModel, Arma Hobby, Brengun, or even MisterCraft. The cockpit receives new panels for the sidewalls – with different items for the fighter and fighter-bomber variants, plus early/later production airframes – along with new side consoles, which benefit from separate throttle and control levers, plus trim wheels. It's not just the interior that receives attention, though, with the type's wing-mounted fuel gauges also included. As always with Yahu products, the pre-printed/painted surfaces are superb, with text that's legible under magnification.

Zündapp KS 750 MG 34 with gun mount and magazine carrier

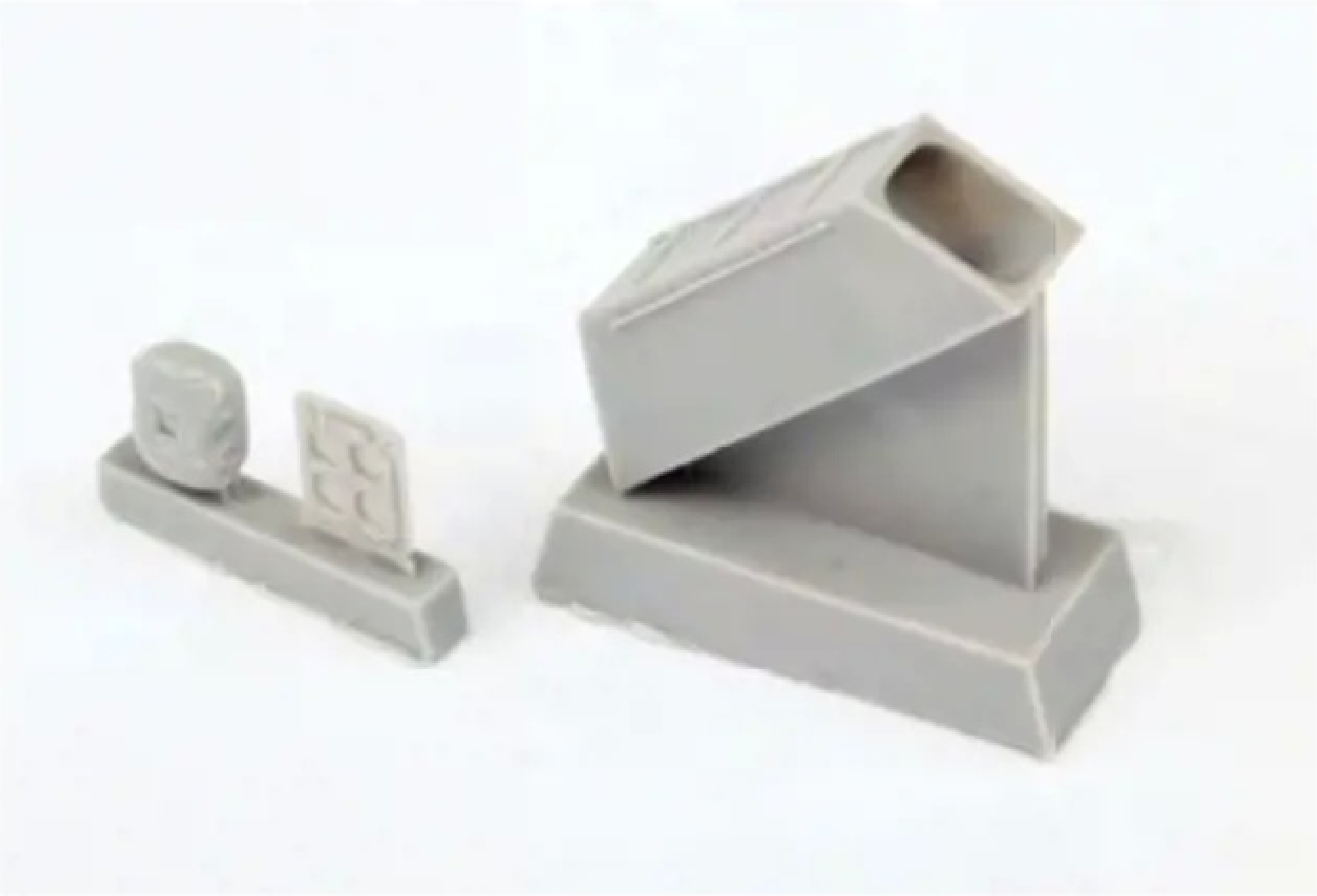
By: Special Hobby **Scale:** 1/35
Item no: P35035 **Price:** €12
Web: www.specialhobby.eu

Academy's recent Zündapp KS 750 with Sidecar (part of the firm's 13556 German Panzer I Ausf. B & Motorcycle kit) has attracted several upgrade sets. Special Hobby's offering replaces the styrene MG 34 and mount with far superior 3D-printed version, along with a spare magazine carrier (fitted with two magazines). All parts are presented on a single printing plinth, and the detail is exquisite, from the MG 34's perforated cooling jacket to the one-piece magazine carrier with integral drums, which also have handles. The gun mount also comes as a single piece, and includes the gun cradle and pintle, making this a straightforward addition to the kit.

LAU-33 5in Launcher with Mk.32 Mod 0 AT/AP Warheads

By: Flying Leathernecks Scale Creations **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: FL48-8077 **Price:** $10
Web: www.flyingleathernecksdecals.com

Twin-tube LAU-33 rocket launchers were a common sight on US Marine Corps F-4 Phantom, F-8 Crusader and OV-10 Bronco aircraft in Vietnam, and this superb set provides two units, plus four rocket motor bodies and four warheads each for impact and proximity-fuzed munitions. The quality here is excellent, from the finely rendered hollow launch tubes to the 'saddle' with pylon attachment lugs, while the warheads are equally impressive, with just the slightest hint of printing lines, but these should disappear under a primer coat. They're certainly far superior to any styrene alternative and will make for a fine addition to a model.



TBF-3/TBM-3 Dinghy Box

By: CMK **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: 4490 **Price:** €9
Web: www.cmkkits.com

If you're looking to add something different to your 1/48 scale TBF/TBM Avenger build, this set is worth considering, as it provides a fuselage dinghy box, plus the top of a dinghy if the hatch is posed open. It's designed to fit the Accurate Miniatures kits (plus reboxes by Academy and Italeri), and clear guidance is provided on where the kit parts will need cutting to allow the new resin insert to be fitted – note, the turret mounting block (Part 58) must be shortened. The casting is first rate, and the attachment gates to the blocks have been minimised where possible, which should ease preparartion. Modellers will need to check references for dinghy colours.

Mosquito FB.VI ASH Radar Conversion

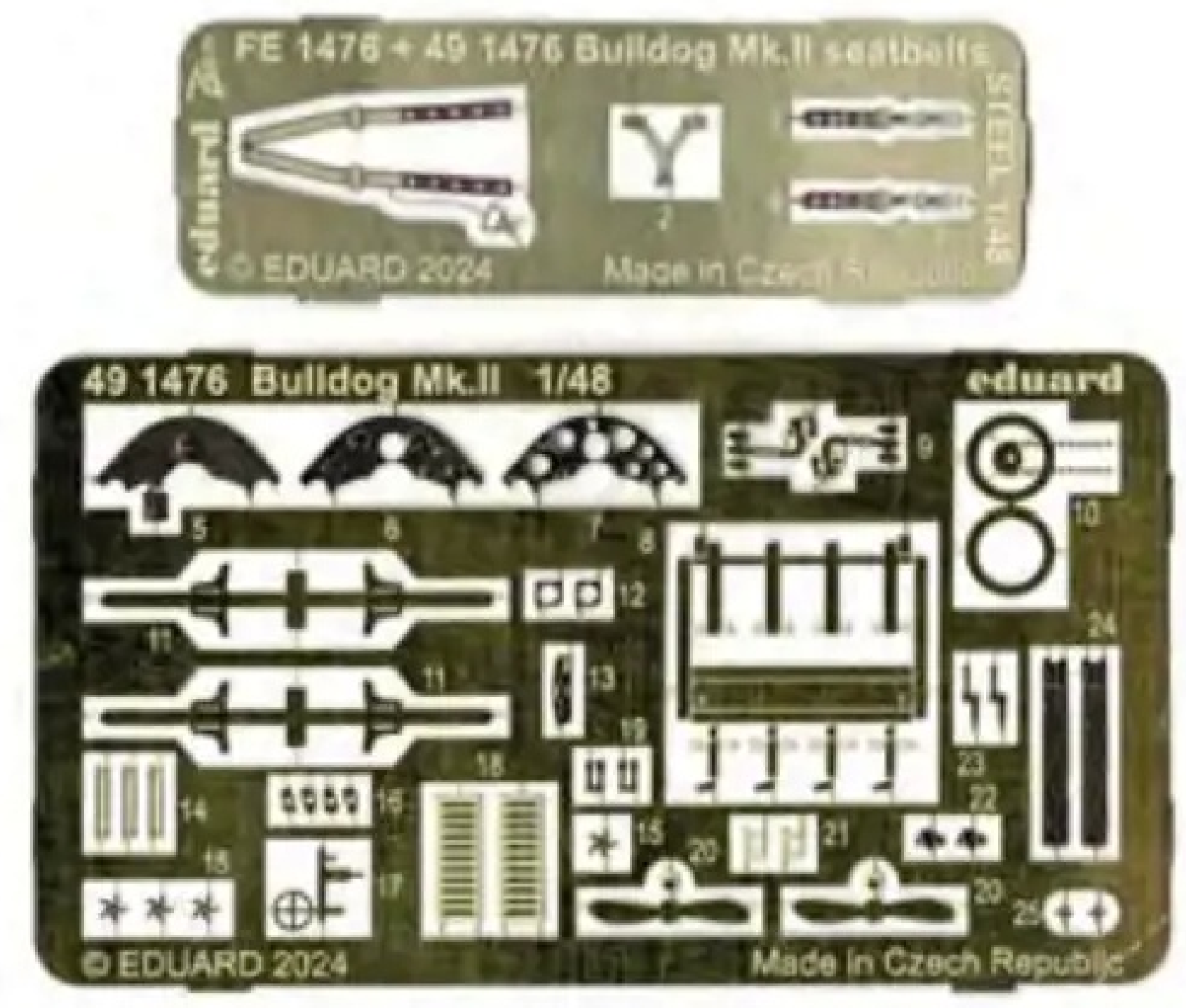
By: AlleyCat Models **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: ACM72087C **Price:** £8.50
Web: www.modelsforsale.com

This well-designed resin set from AlleyCat is devised to convert Tamiya's 1/72 Mosquito FB.VI into the ASH (Air-surface, model H) radar-equipped airframe. Although minor surgery is needed on the fuselage halves to remove the tail fairing for the replacement Monica tail warning radar unit, the rest of the components are drop-in items. These include a radar display unit for the cockpit, the ASH nose fairing and a pair of underwing slipper-type fuel tanks. Minimal preparation is needed, as there are no casting blocks, with just wispy flash to remove. Note, you'll need to source markings separately as none are included in this set.

Kokusai Ta-Go

By: Brengun **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: BRL48180 **Price:** €12.21
Web: www.brengun.cz

This neat resin and photo-etched (PE) metal upgrade set is designed for Brengun's new-tool 1/48 Kokusai Ta-Go. Replacement mainwheels, bomb (just the body), centreline pylon, crutching pads, oil tank, exhaust stubs and a venturi are supplied as resin items, and here the casting is superb, with the tyre tread being a standout element. The plain PE fret provides a new instrument panel (with dials presented on a pre-painted acetate sheet), seatbelts, reduction gear plates, windscreen frame (for yet more acetate), bomb fins plus fuel tank and oil cooler straps. It's a comprehensive pack that will add extra refinement to your Kokusai model.



Bulldog Mk.II

By: Eduard **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: 491476 **Price:** £9.81
Web: www.eduard.com

This two-fret photo-etched (PE) metal set is designed for Airfix's recent newly-tooled Bulldog Mk.II. The first fret has a mix of plain and pre-painted components, and replaces the moulded detail on the instrument panel with a three-piece laminated sub-assembly that's most convincing. There is also a superb bomb rack for under the wings, plus flare holders, gunsight and engine cooling grilles; sidewall and console control levers and trim wheels are also replaced. The second fret is a rare inclusion for a general upgrade set, as it's a complete seat harness (usually supplied separately), which will do much to improve the cockpit's appearance.

Hs 126A

By: Yahu Models **Scale:** 1/72
Item no: YMA7341 **Price:** £5.99
Web: www.yahumodels.com

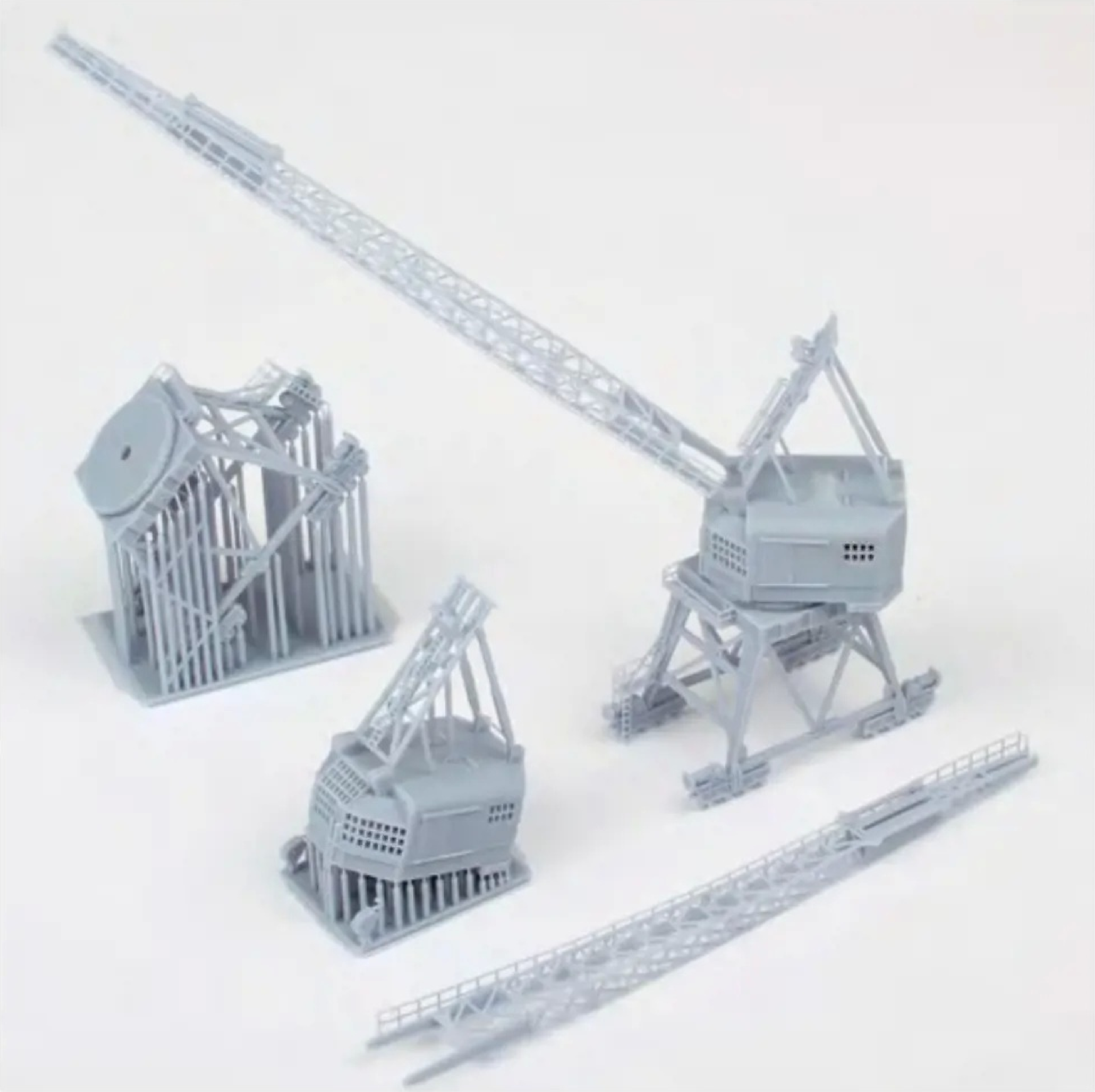
Designed to fit kits by KP, Dabre and Brengun, Yahu's pre-painted photo-etched (PE) metal instrument panel set replicates the cockpit interior of an early airframe, being coloured RLM 02; the main instrument panel is a pre-assembled item that is attached to the kit panel once the moulded detail has been removed, and the difference is striking. That's not all, though, as the intermediate bulkhead also receives attention, replacing the radio 'face' and repeater instruments in their entirety – pre-printed acetate decals must be sandwiched between the PE and kit parts. Note, side console components 5 and 6 are for kit parts 33 and 32, respectively, not 23 and 22 as in the instructions.

DOCKYARD BUILDINGS AND CRANE FROM BLACK CAT MODELS

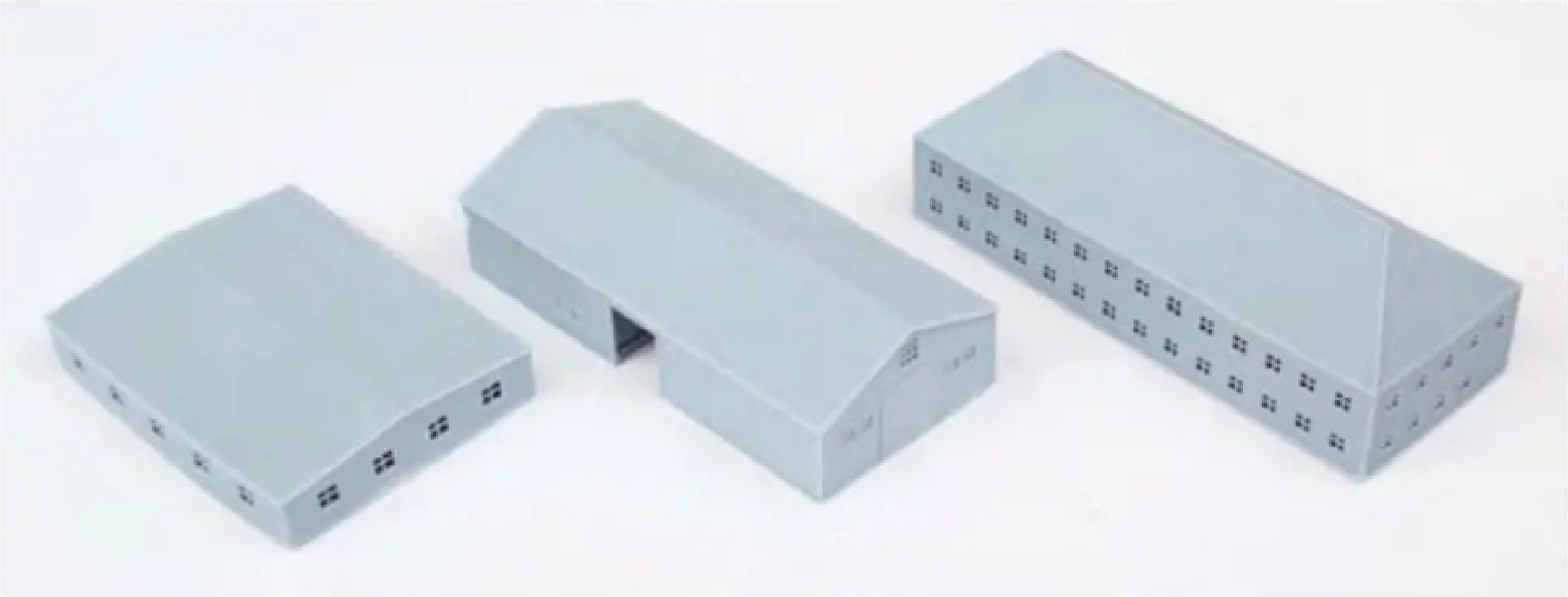
FRENCH AFTERMARKET and kit specialist Black Cat Models is already well known for its exquisitely detailed maritime upgrade sets and ships, but has recently expanded its catalogue to include 1/700 dockside buildings, cranes and barges. All are suitable for World War Two US Navy shipyards, with a mix of types and sizes available.

Bevy of buildings

Starting with the dockside facilities, DD350011a (€17.95) provides a one-piece, two-storey Office Building, complete with cross-beams on the windows. Printing lines were apparent on this sample, but they should be less conspicuous once primed and painted. A single-component high-bay General-Purpose Warehouse (DD350011b; €17.95) provides a dockyard mainstay, with multiple such building seen at US Navy facilities. Internal walls are printed integrally, providing much needed rigidity, while doors are open on one side.



The final building reviewed here is a One-Storey Barrack (DD350011d; €12.95) and this is equally impressive, with internal walls and window cross-members included out of the box.



Barge quartet

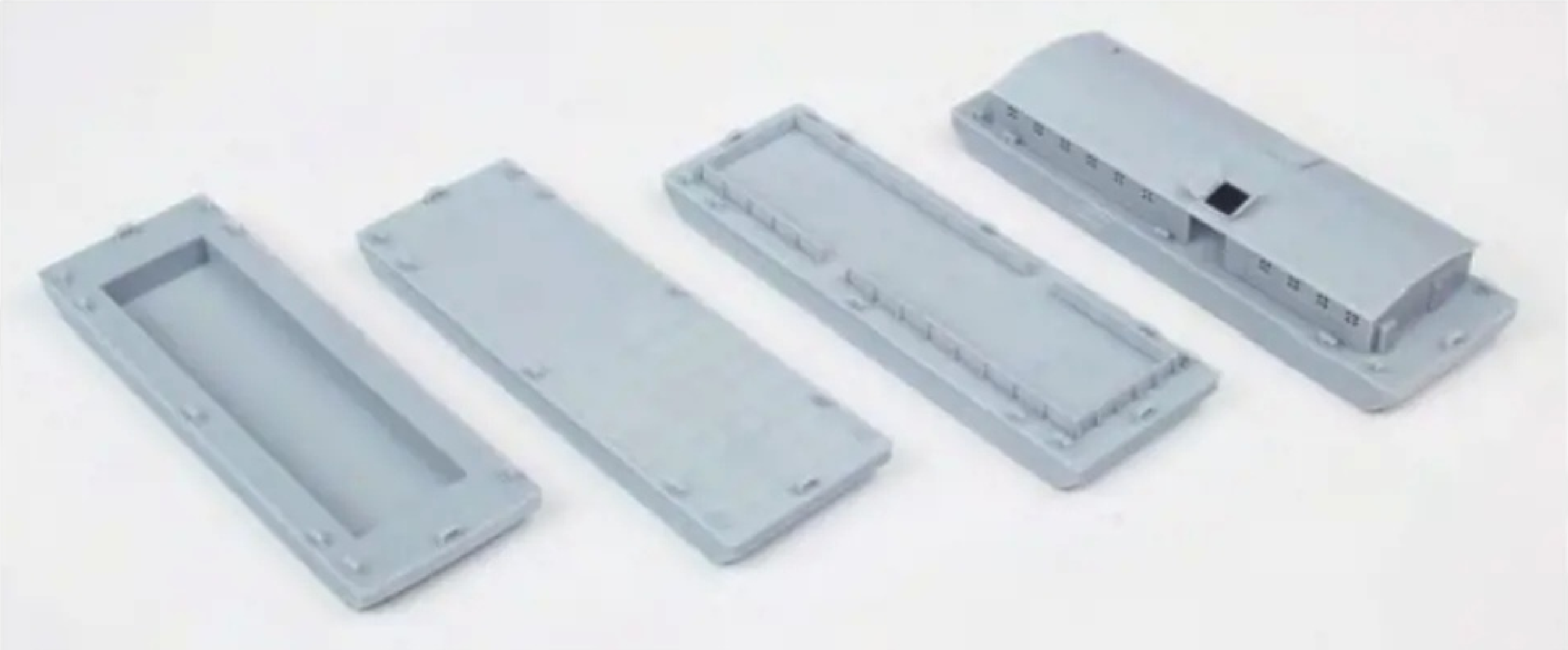
Shifting attention to watercraft, there are eight different barge sets currently available, of which four are reviewed here. Each comprises a main barge section, plus a common printing plinth with multiple cleats, bitts and closed chocks that are positioned around the edges. Those with building structures have additional plinths providing the buildings and doors/hatches.

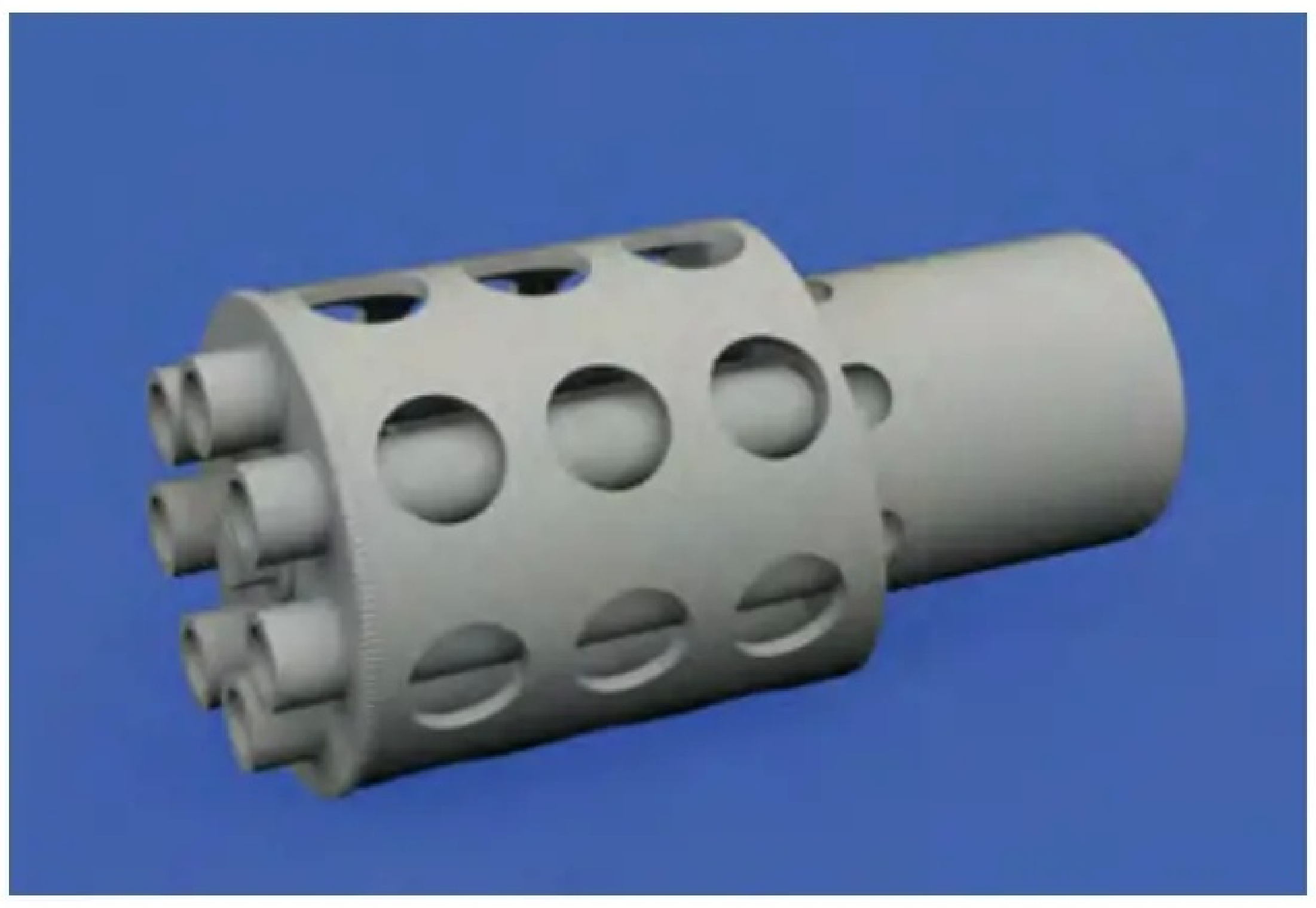
The first two examples are basic, with the Bulk Cargo Barge (DD350001a; €15.95) and Deck Barge (DD350001b; €15.95) providing just the barge; the former has a cargo bed that's below the deck level, while the latter has an overall flat deck. The Deck Cargo Barge (DD350001c; €15.95) builds on the basic deck barge with the inclusion of an integral fence-like structure encompassing the load area. There's a big step to the next item, the YF/YFN Covered Lighter (DD350002b; €15.95) which takes a deck-type barge and adds a single-storey warehouse structure, complete with a choice of open/closed side doors and roof hatches. Regardless, the detail is superb throughout, from the ribbing on the lighter's roof to the embossed 'US Navy' legend on the barge sides.

Massive lifters

Last, but by no means least, is a set of two dockside US Navy ABSD-1 cranes (DD350008a; €23.95). These appear to have been used on the massive USS *Artisan* (ABSD-1) floating dry dock in particular, with one on each side. This fact is reflected in Black Cat's pack, with a single crane supplied for each side of the dock/ship. Despite their apparent complexity, there are just four pieces for each crane: a base structure (with running gear for the dockside rail lines), cab/control section, lattice jib and hook. Once removed from their casting plinths, preparation will be minimal, although a primer coat would be advisable. Basic assembly is straightforward: insert the cab locating pin into a pre-formed hole in the base, and slot the jib into two finely separated plates. Note, modellers will need to add their own cables for the jib and hook – reference photos will be vital for an accurate configuration.

More on these and other Black Cat Models products is available at the firm's website at https://blackcatmodels.eu





A-10C Rotary Gun Flash Suppressor

By: Eduard **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: 6481018 **Price:** £2.13
Web: www.eduard.com

Here's a superb addition to the Great Wall Hobby 1/48 A-10C 'Warthog' in the shape of a replacement 3D-printed resin GAU-8 Avenger rotary cannon muzzle. Compared to the kit item, this replacement has superior hollow muzzles for each barrel, with convincing depth to the barrels, while the 'jacket' perforations are correctly sized (they are represented as just slight depressions on the styrene version) and these allow the individual barrels to be visible, just as on the real aircraft. Once separated from its printing plinth, this should be a straightforward drop-in replacement. All together now: "BRRRRRRRRT!"

ALCOHOL BOTTLES WITH BOXES
35665
MiniArt
SCALE 1:35
BUILDINGS & ACCESSORIES SERIES

Alcohol Bottles With Boxes

By: MiniArt **Scale:** 1/35
Item no: 35665 **Price:** £19.99
Web: www.creativemodels.co.uk

If you're looking to include wine/beer/brandy or other alcohol-holding bottles, in a diorama, then this set from MiniArt is a must. There are 24 runners in total, equally split between bottles (in green- and brown-tinted clear styrene) and crates, the latter comprising four each of three different styles – each containing dividers – allowing them to hold between ten and 20 bottles (Miniart supplies more than 180 bottles). The crates are also different sizes, adding to the variety. All parts are moulded beautifully, and even representation of the crates' metal handles included. Decals are supplied for the crates and bottles, providing labelling and stencilling.

F/A-18D Basic Update BuNo's 163986 and up

By: Flying Leathernecks Scale Creations **Scale:** 1/48
Item no: FL48-8134 **Price:** $15
Web: www.flyingleatherneckdecals.com

If you're looking to build an accurate night-attack 1/48 F/A-18D from Hasegawa's kit, then Flying Leathernecks' 3D-printed set is ideal. As with its F/A-18C set (FL48-8133, see Accessories, *AMW*174), the kit's instrument panels are replaced, the new items featuring the correct displays, there are cockpit floor sections with integral rudder pedals, plus a pair of control columns; a new rear cockpit coaming is also included. External 'goodies' are as per the F/A-18C set, with a GPS antenna, two styles of comms antennas, angle-of-attack sensors and a five-piece AN/APX-111 'bird-slicers' IFF antenna. It's also available via Hannants, priced £14.99.

Mirage III Yahu

Mirage IIIE/RD

By: Yahu Models **Scale:** 1/32
Item no: YML3208 **Price:** £10.40
Web: www.yahumodels.com

Intended to be suitable for either the Revell or Italeri 1/32 Mirage III kits, this beautifully designed pre-painted photo-etched (PE) metal and printed acetate sheet upgrade set provides a replacement instrument panel and side consoles. Unlike other products in this series, modellers will need to laminate the parts themselves, making this a more complex upgrade due to the number of parts (21), but the result will be a far superior representation of the cockpit than provided in either kit. The acetate sheet also has extra dials, and there's a choice of two upper centre sections, depending on whether a Mirage IIIE or R is being built.

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  Website: **goinglocomodels.com**

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- **SALISBURY MODEL CENTRE**
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  Wiltshire SP2 7SU
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  Website: **www.salisburymodelcentre.co.uk**
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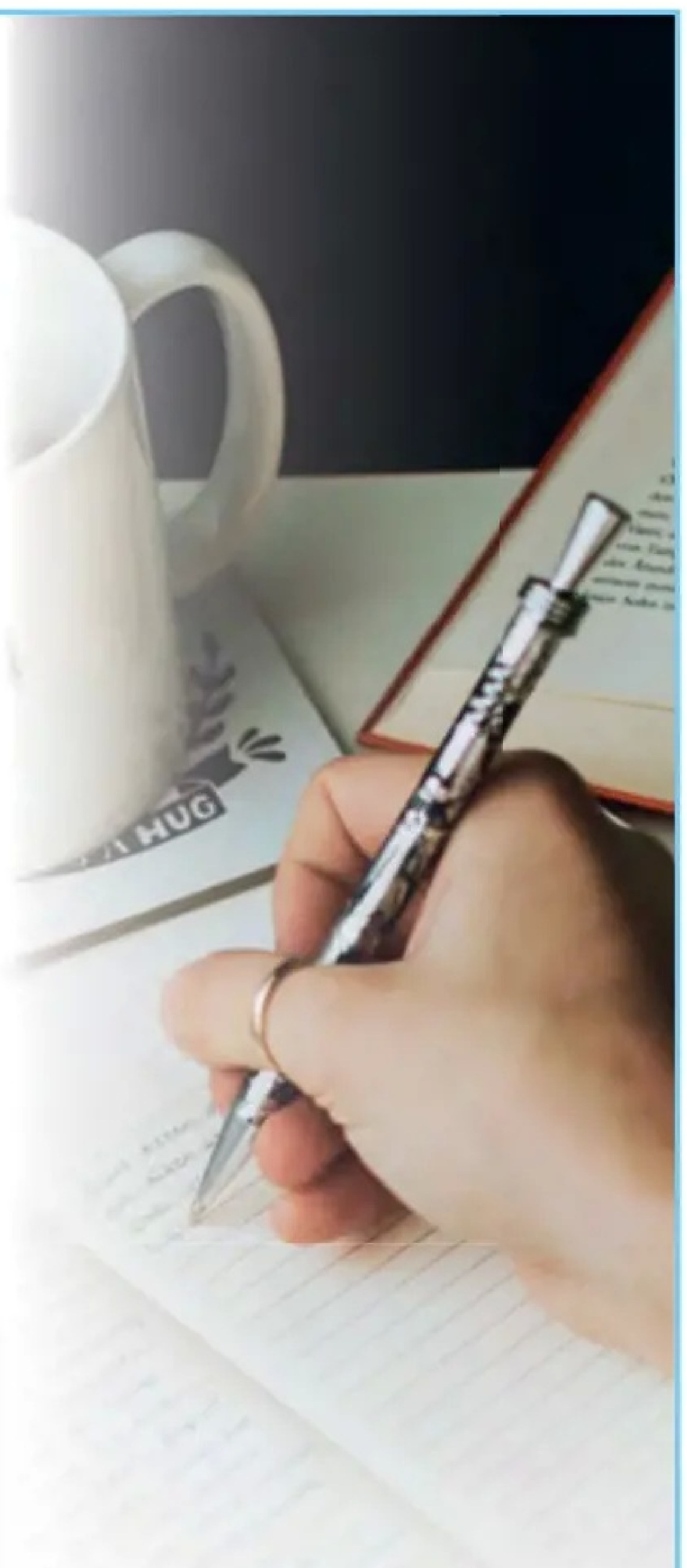
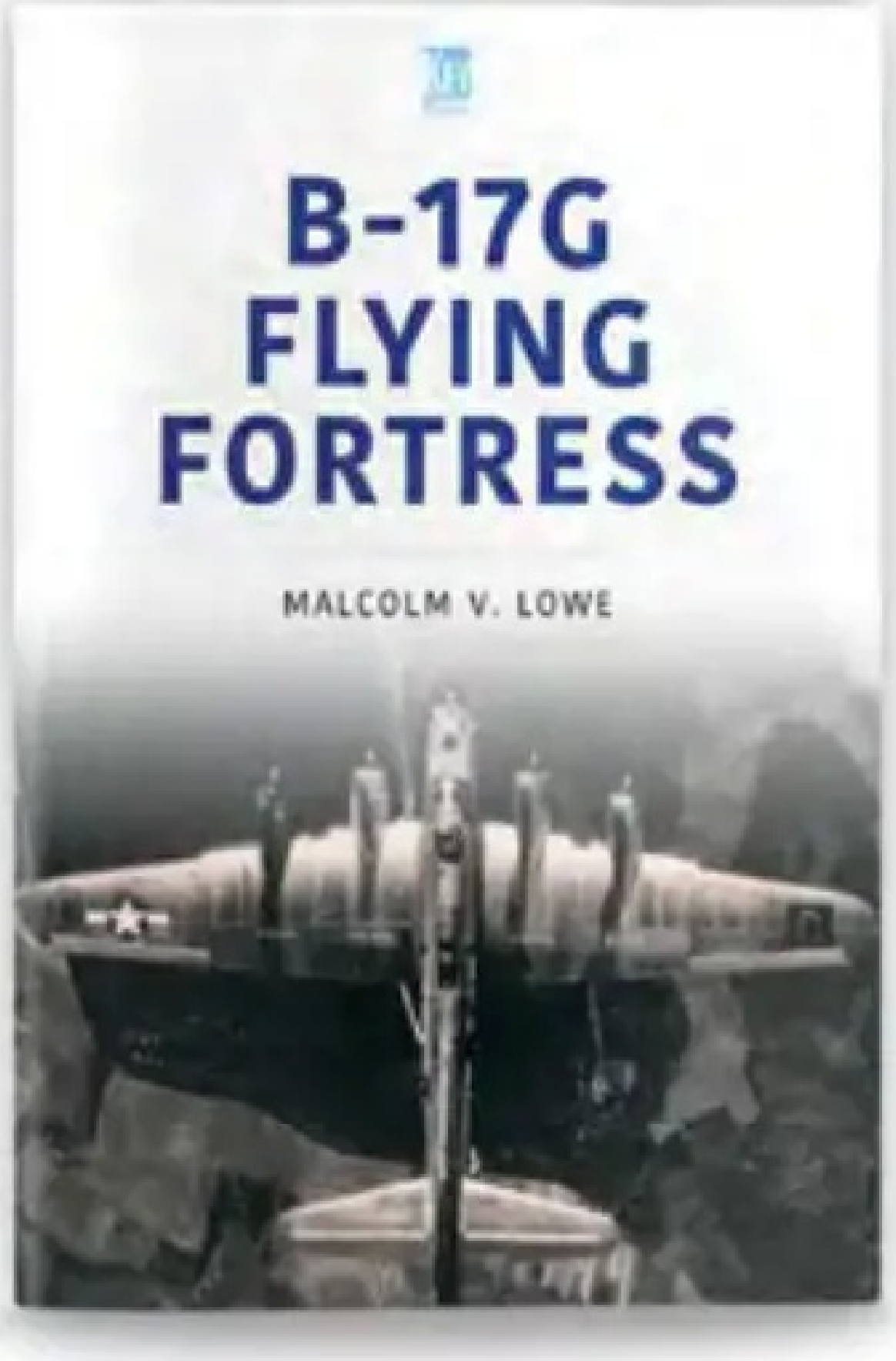
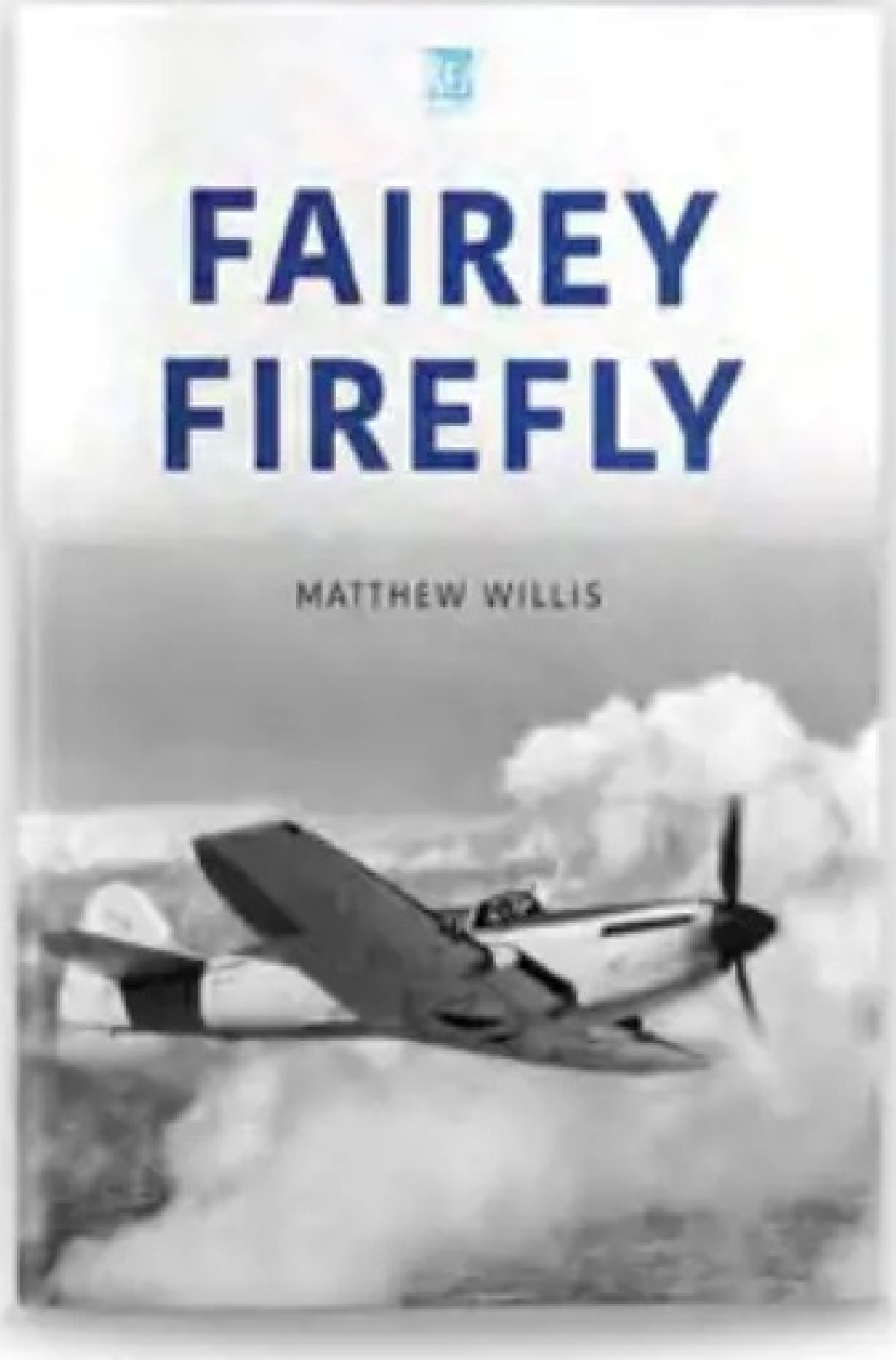
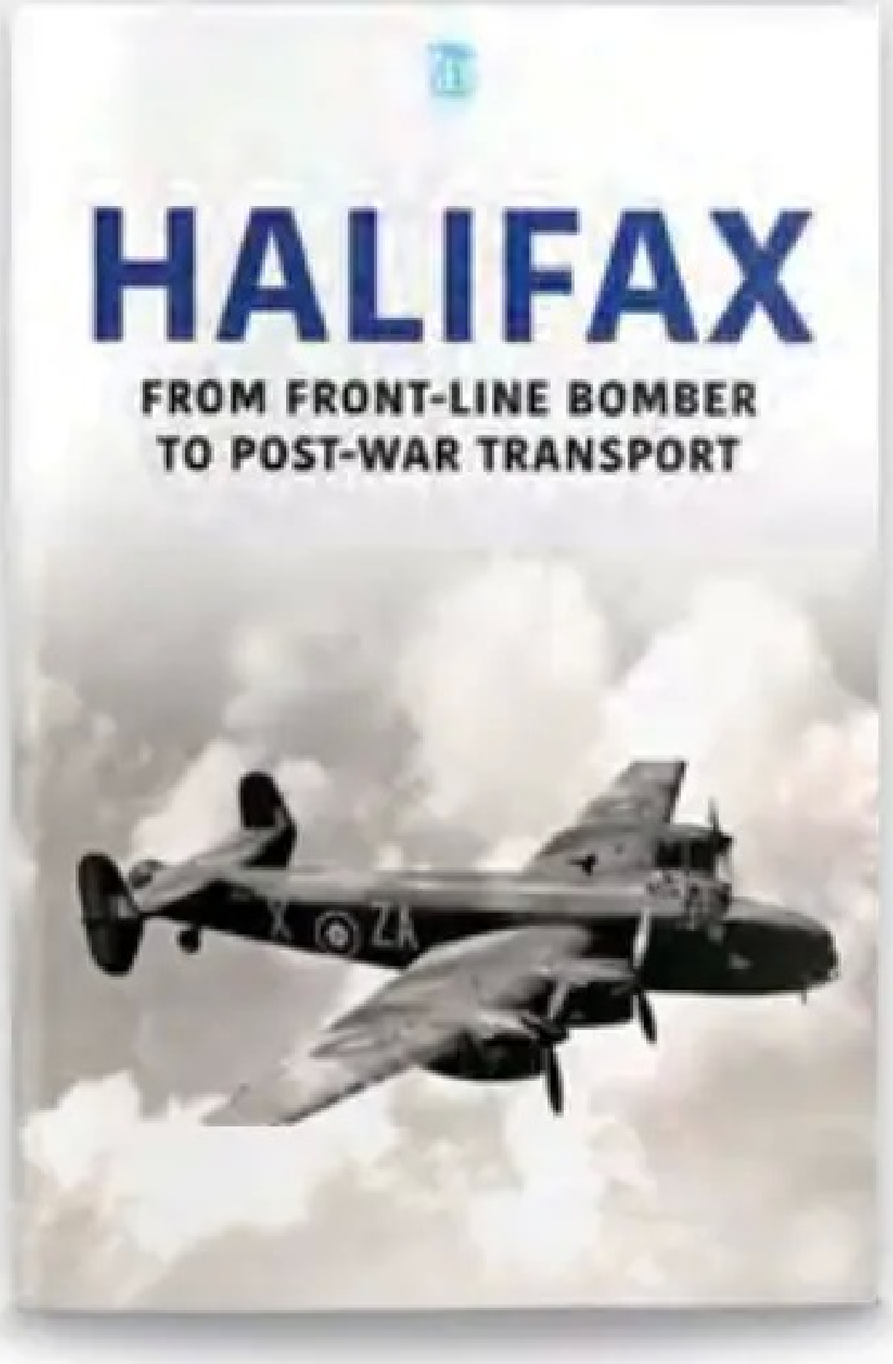


BRITISH AIRCRAFT OF THE FALKLANDS WAR
LEE CHAPMAN







We look forward to hearing from you!

SHOW GUIDE

At-a-glance model show calendar

KEY

👁 Model Display	✈ Aircraft Display	☕ Refreshments
🏅 Model Competition	🪖 Military Display	P Free Parking
🏷 Trade Stands	🚗 Automotive Display	🖌 Make 'N' Paint

Westland Lynx HAS.2
815 NAS, HMS Southampton,
Falkland islands July 1983.
334

West Anglia Scale Model Show

Date:	June 22, 2025
Hosts:	West Norfolk IPMS Scale Model Club
Address:	Littleport Leisure Centre, Camel Road, Littleport, Cambs CB6 1EW
Times:	Sat 10am-4pm
Prices:	Adults £3, under 16s £1, under 5s free
Email:	ipmswestnorfolkwasms@gmail.com
Web:	West Norfolk IPMS (Facebook)

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May

18 IPMS Lancashire Northwest Kitswap

Hosts: IPMS Lancashire
Address: The Canberra Club,
Samlesbury Aerodrome,
Balderstone, Lancs BB2 7LF
Times: 9.30am-2pm
Prices: Free
Email: ipmslancs@gmail.com
Web: www.ipmslancashire.wordpress.com

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31 IPMS Salisbury Scale Model Show

Hosts: IPMS Salisbury
Address: Wyvern St Edmund's Sports Hall, Church Road, Laverstock, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 1RD
Times: 09.30am-4.30pm
Prices: Adults £5, children free
Email: modelshow@ipmssalisbury.co.uk
Web: www.ipmssalisbury.co.uk

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31 Plymouth Model Show

Hosts: Plymouth Pilgrims and IPMS Plymouth
Address: John Kitto YMCA Centre,
Honicknowle Lane, Plymouth,
Devon PL5 3NG
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: Adults £5, concessions £3 and families £10
Email: ekcork@btinternet.com
Web: www.mafva.org

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31 Tangmere Scale Model Show

Hosts: Tangmere IPMS Scale Modellers
Address: Boxgrove Village Hall,
The Street, Boxgrove,
West Sussex PO18 0EE
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: TBC
Email: Tangmerescalemodellers@gmail.com
Web: Tangmere Sector Modellers IPMS (Facebook)

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June

7 Mildenhall Model Fair – 2025

Hosts: Mildenhall Scale Model Club
Address: The Jubilee Centre,
Mildenhall, Suffolk
IP28 7HG
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: Free
Email: Free
Web: N/A

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15 MAFVA National Competition

Hosts: MAFVA
Address: The Burgess Hall,
Westwood Road,
St Ives, Cambs
PE27 6WU
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: MAFVA members free, adults £5, concessions and accompanied under 16s £2
Email: liaison@mafva.net
Web: www.mafva.org

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22 Coventry & Warwickshire IPMS Show

Hosts: Coventry & Warwickshire IPMS
Address: Midland Air Museum, Coventry Airport, Baginton, CV3 4FR
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: Adults £8.95, Children £4.25, Under 5s Free, OAPs £8.25
Email: enquiries@midlandairmuseum.co.uk
Web: www.midlandairmuseum.co.uk

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22 North Somerset Modelling Society Show

Hosts: North Somerset Modellers Society
Address: The Helicopter Museum,
Locking Moor Road, Weston-Super-Mare, BS24 8PP
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: Adults £13, concessions £11, children £6
Email: N/A
Web: www.helicoptermuseum.co.uk

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July

5 Scale Model South Show 2025

Hosts: Hailsham & District Scale Model Club
Address: Eastbourne Sports Park, Cross Levels Way, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 2UF
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: Adults £5, under 16s free
Email: info@hailsham-district-scale-model-club.org
Web: https://hailsham-district-scale-model-club.org

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6 Skipton Model Show

Hosts: Whurr Models
Address: Town Hall,
High Street,
Skipton,
North Yorks
BD23 1AH
Times: 10am-4.30pm
Prices: Adults £4, OAPs and accompanied under 16s free
Email: whurr@yahoo.com
Web: N/A

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26-27 Fen Model Show 2025

Hosts: FMS Team
Address: The Maltings,
Ship Lane,
Ely, Cambs
CB7 4BB
Times: Sat 10am-5pm
Sun 10am-5pm
Prices: £15 for both days (advance £12), accompanied under 16s free
Email: N/A
Web: https://fenmodelshow.co.uk/

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August

2 Dundee Model Show

Hosts: IPMS Dundee
Address: Boomerang Community Centre, 10 Kemback Street, Dundee DD4 6ET
Times: 10am-4pm
Prices: Adults £5, accompanied under 16s free
Email: gordon.short@tiscali.co.uk
Web: https://ipmsdundee.com

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Please note, all events are subject to change and cancellation. These listings are collated from various sources and are believed to be correct at the time of going to press – check with organisers prior to attendance. If you're planning a model show, please email details in the format shown to: **stuart.fone@keypublishing.com** Further information is available at: **www.KeyModelWorld.com**

NEXT MONTH

The next issue of *AMW* goes on sale in the UK on **June 5, 2025**

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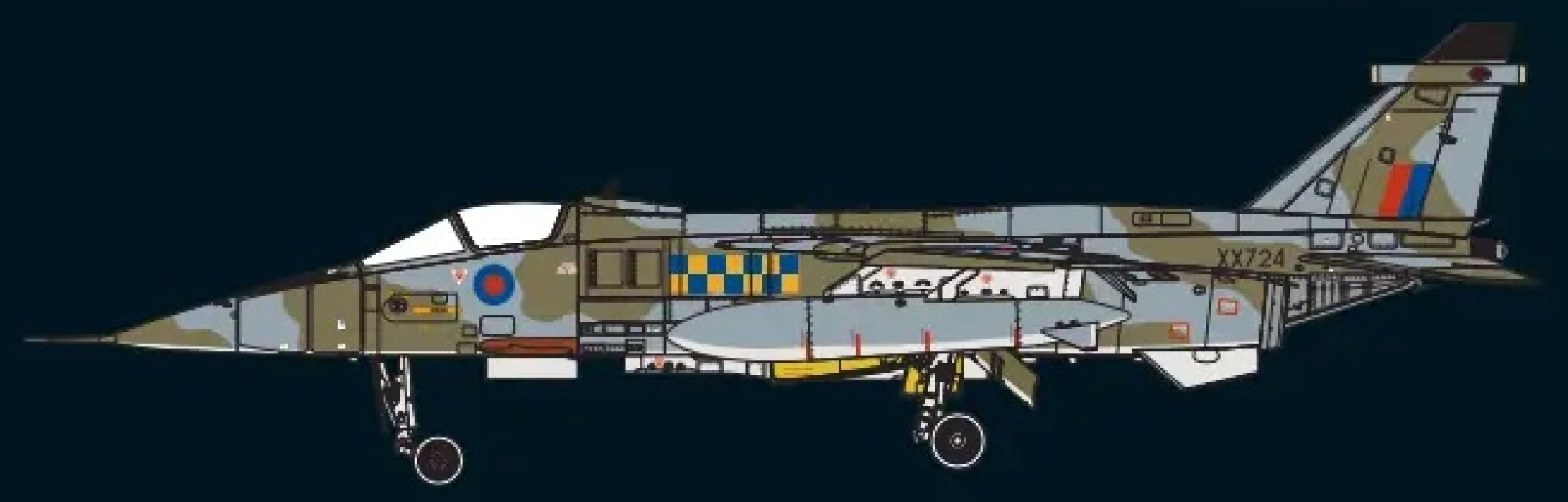
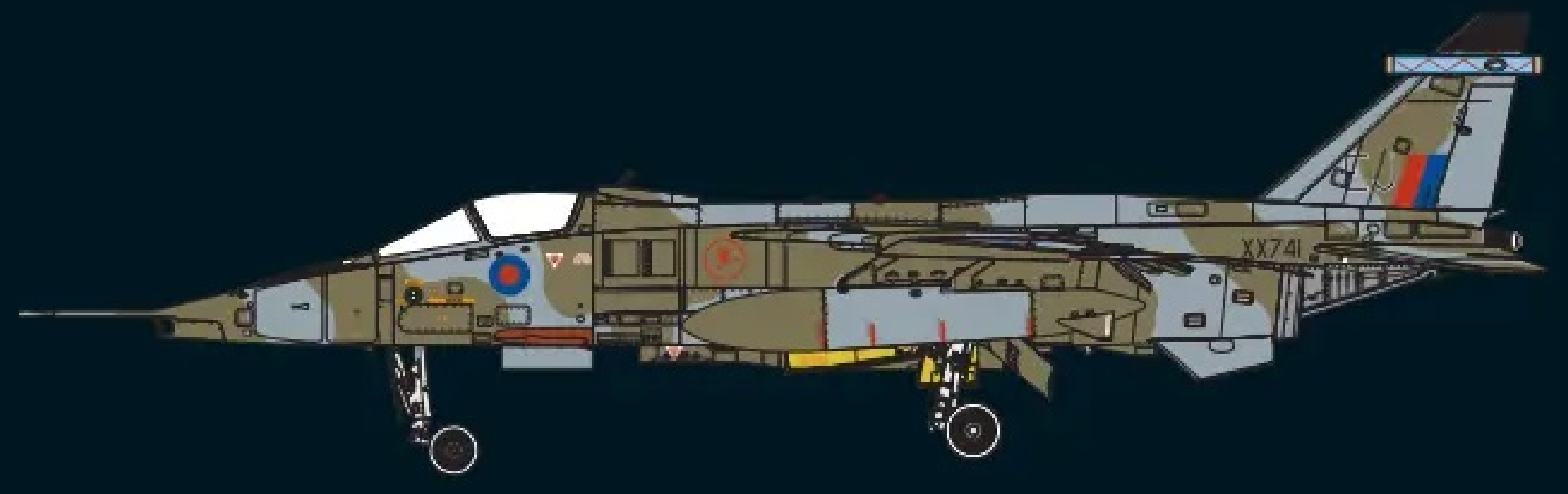
SEPECAT Jaguar GR.1/GR.1A

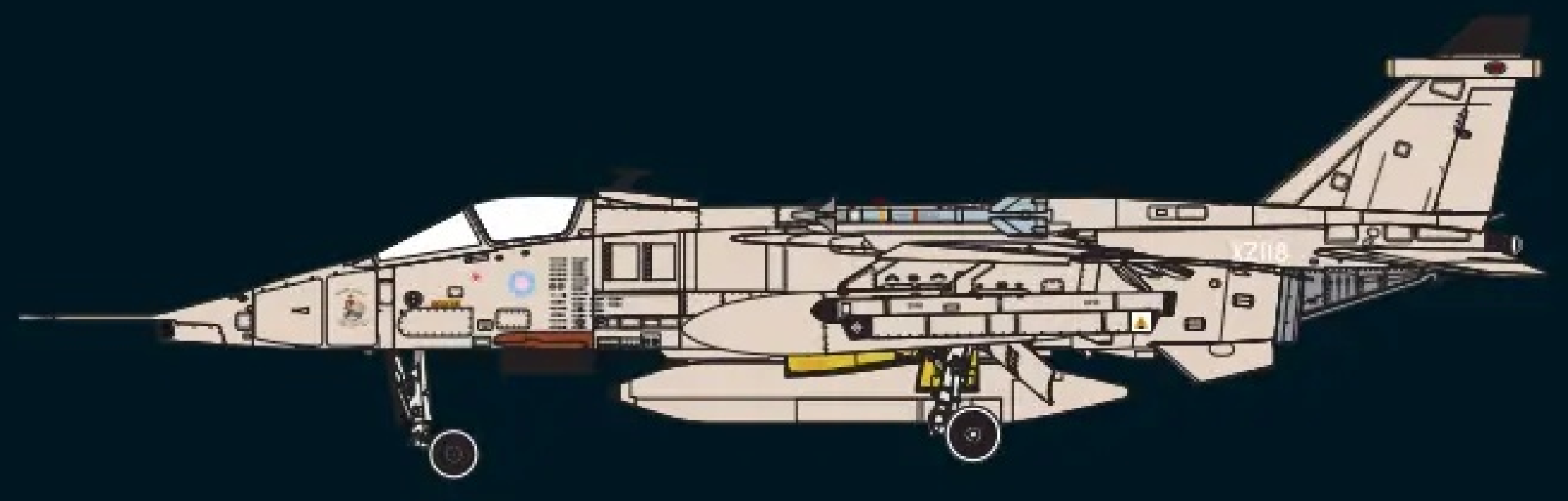
A11010



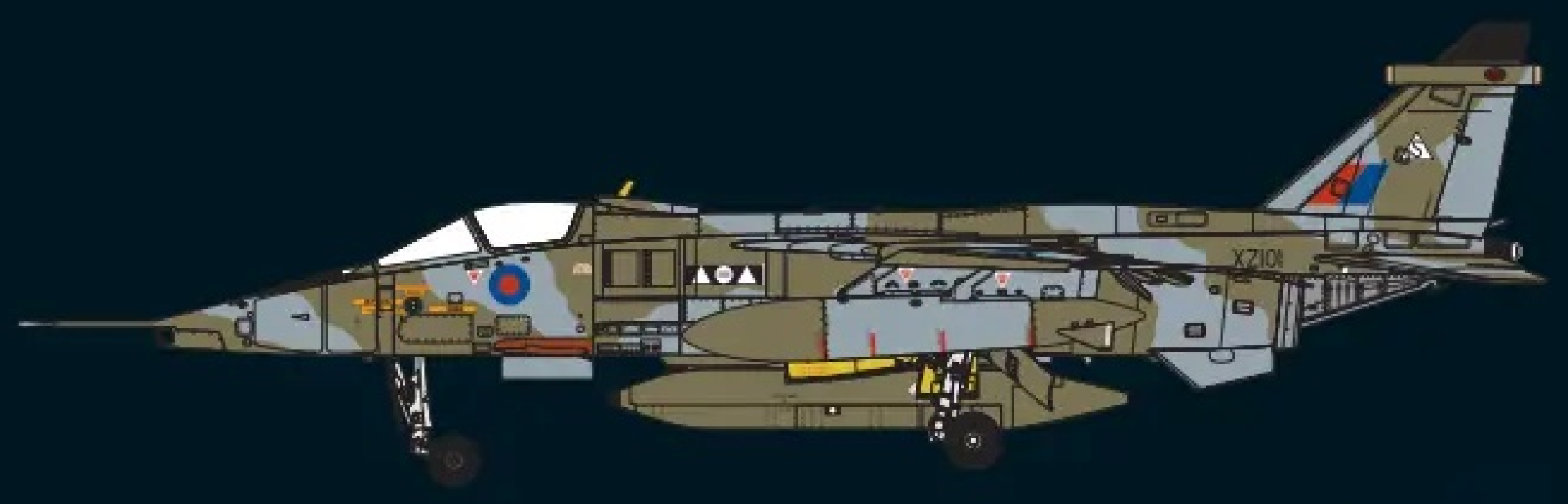
SEPECAT JAGUAR GR.1
No.54(F) Squadron, Royal Air Force Lossiemouth, Scotland, 1974.



SEPECAT JAGUAR GR.1A
No.6 Squadron, Royal Air Force Coltishall, Norfolk, England, 1990-94.



SEPECAT JAGUAR GR.1A
Operation Granby/Desert Storm, Muharraq Airport, Bahrain, 1990-91.



SEPECAT JAGUAR GR.1
No.11(AC) Squadron, Royal Air Force Laarbruch, West Germany, 1976.

Length 348mm Width 181mm Pieces 243

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